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"OH, LOR!" CRINGE SHRIEKED; "CALL THE DOG OFF; HE IS WORRYING ME TO DEATH."

## HAPPY HAL AND HIS BRAVE BOYS.

### CHAPTER I.

OLD FRIENDS—A HAPPY RETURN—THE FIRST DAY OF THE HALF—SAMSON MAKES A RESOLUTION NOT TO BE PUT DOWN.  
In my opinion the most delightful music to be heard for love or money is the clear and ringing

laughter fresh from youthful hearts, and as I stand in fancy, as I stood in reality years ago, at the bend of the road leading to Spankington Academy, the air rings with the laughter of some half-dozen lads.

They are seated in a waggonette, and are almost up to their necks in luggage.

That is Happy Hal's voice, so clear, and bold, yet so fresh and inspiring.

Who can mistake Phil Catchit's laugh, as he

gets a loutish reply to a question from a despairing shopkeeper, who knows full well that now the boys are back again, the reign of terror has returned?

There is cousin Tom Catchit making the most hideous faces at a nervous old lady, and, in short, all is jolly, uproarious, and mirthful, save the brothers Cobbles, who are somewhere under the piles of luggage, sucking their thumbs like sulky Jack Horners.



"There's the Reverend Crawley Cringe," Hal sang out; "he looks as sleek as ever."

"And there is Splitback," Phil Catchit said; "my eye, hasn't he got fat during the holidays?"

"Sampson is coming to meet us," Herbert Wanstead chimed in. "Well, lads, we are back again at last, and it is no use moping about home. A few more months, a little patience, any number of scrapes to get into and out of, and we shall see the dear faces again. Down with the dumps, and hurrah for broad grins and jolly speers, say I."

"You are better than all the physic in the world, Bertie," Happy Hal said, grasping his friend's hand and pressing it warmly.

"Tonics are nothing to him," Phil Catchit observed. "See, he has even raised a smile on Obadiah's classical visage."

"I am not smiling," Obadiah growled, "and I don't mean to at any such rubbish."

Phil Catchit felt about his waistcoat for a pin, but before he had time to use it on the sulky youth the waggonette passed through the school gates.

The boys tumbled out and were greeted cordially by the Rev. Crawley Cringe, Mr. Splitback, and Miss Nobbin, who kissed each in a good-natured if old-maidish fashion.

Samson watched the proceedings at a distance, until ordered to carry in the luggage, and then he wrestled with each trunk and package as if he had so many boys to deal with.

Probably the porter, knowing full well that the lads were too much for him, vented his spleen on their property.

"So," said the Rev. Crawley Cringe, "at last I have the pleasure of seeing my new pupil, Master Thomas Catchit, I—"

"My name is Tom Catchit," Phil's cousin interrupted. "Now then, don't kick my port-manteau about, or you'll get wrong."

These last words were addressed to Sampson, who glared at the youth as if he could have turned cannibal on the spot and taken him down at a mouthful.

"He will make a nice object for stuffing, won't he?" Tom Catchit said, turning to Mr. Splitback; "there isn't a mummy half so ugly in the British Museum."

"Hush!" Mr. Splitback replied, in a dignified whisper. "You must not be personal."

"Bless you, sir," Tom Catchit replied, with refreshing coolness, "I wouldn't hurt anybody's feelings for the world. I meant it as a compliment."

"So this is Spankington Academy! Well, it is a precious old place, and don't look over clean, but I suppose it is all right."

The Rev. Crawley Cringe overheard the last remark, and became so stiff and straight that I may be pardoned for saying, that he looked as if he had swallowed an elongated thunderbolt.

"Philip Catchit," he said, "I fear your cousin has not profited by being in your company. Evil communications—"

"Don't you call me evil," Phil blurted out. "I'm as good as those who talk about me any day."

"And this," said Cringe, with a despairing glance at Mr. Splitback, "is the commencement of a new term. Get away upstairs, and wash and dress yourselves for dinner. Let us have no angry words."

"Then you shouldn't pitch into me for what other people do," Phil growled.

"Quite right," Tom cried, giving his cousin a mighty slap on the back. "I can take my own part. Now, then, lead the way, and show me the luxurious apartment where I am to repose. I hope there are no Turkey carpets in it, as they are too warm for summer, and harbour fleas."

"Did you hear that?" Crawley Cringe gasped to Mr. Splitback, as the boys clattered upstairs.

"Having ears, I could not help it," the usher replied.

"We shall have some trouble with that boy," Cringe said, leaning despairingly against the doorpost. "Ah me! How I wish that I had never taken a school!"

"And I," Mr. Splitback returned, bitterly. "Curse my hard fate that I was born to be an usher."

"You curse!" Cringe said, willing to quarrel

with anybody and anything in the school on the shortest notice; "I will trouble you, sir, not to use such expressions in my presence. Good heavens, what means that noise?"

"It sounds like somebody in pain."

"It is Obadiah Cobbles," Cringe said, and darted up the staircase.

Reaching the bedroom in which our young friends had retired to smarten themselves up, he found the wretched Obadiah with one leg in the apartment, and the other on the landing, whilst Phil and Tom Catchit kept him in that uncomfortable position, by holding the door with all their strength.

"Oh! lor, let me out," Obadiah Cobbles yelled, "I only come for a little water, because there was not any in my room. Oh! Yah! Oh! You are cutting my leg."

"It's too long, and you won't miss a piece," Tom Catchit cried.

"I'll give you anything, if you'll let me go," Obadiah shrieked. "I shall have plenty of money when I am twenty-one, and I'll write you out a cheque for a hundred a piece, if you'll only let me go."

At this juncture the Rev. Crawley Cringe did a very foolish thing. He ran full butt at the door, at the very moment that the cousins, having frightened Obadiah sufficiently, slipped back into the room.

The result was awful in the extreme.

Like a rocket Crawley Cringe shot into the room, and, flying clean across it, nearly fell out of the open window.

Alarmed at this sudden and unexpected appearance, Phil Catchit flew at the learned gentleman, and hugged him affectionately round the knees, but only for a moment's duration was this embrace.

The Rev. Crawley Cringe kicked out like a vicious mule, and Phil, turning first white, then red, and finally a sickly green, sat down in a corner and counted the buttons of his waistcoat with a rapid movement of his fingers.

"Wretch!" Tom Catchit roared, as he flung about a quarter of a pound of brown soap at Crawley Cringe's head, and didn't miss his aim. "You have killed my cousin; behold your work!"

The reverend gentleman's mind was in such a bewildered state that he could not comprehend anything very clearly, save that a new and as yet undiscovered organ was fast rising on the back of his head.

"It's all right, Tom," said Phil, "I am not hurt much, only wounded; but it's a mercy that I was not seriously injured."

"And would it not have been your own fault?" Crawley Cringe thundered. "How dare you treat Obadiah Cobbles in such a disgraceful manner?"

"He had no right in our room," Phil replied. "He is always spying about."

"I don't wish to flog any boy to-day," Cringe said, working his mouth from side to side with passion; "but—sir—if you give me any more trouble I will take you to my study, and just give you an instalment of what you may expect this term, if you continue as you did in the last."

"Was he very bad, sir?" Tom Catchit asked, smiling. "You should see him at home. He's so goody-goody that butter wouldn't melt in his mouth."

Cringe bounded out of the room, and, encountering Obadiah Cobbles, boxed his ears soundly, because he was seated on the stairs hugging his legs.

"You might have tripped me up, and flung me headlong down the staircase," Cringe said. "Get away to your room at once, or I'll send you to bed with a smarting back."

Poor Obadiah was now fully engaged.

With one hand he rubbed his leg, and with the other he smoothed his ears, but fearing another attack, he picked himself up and went limping and groaning to his room.

It was not long before the dinner bell sounded. Samson was then in a brand-new striped jacket ornamented with brass buttons, but the beauty of the garment was marred by the expression of the old man's face.

"There's biled and roast mutton, and roast beef," he said to Hal. "What'll you take?"

"A portion of boiled mutton," Hal said.

"And bring me some roast beef," Wanstead cried out.

"While you are about it," said Phil, "you may as well send me some roast mutton."

Samson, who did the carving occasionally, went to work on a leg of mutton as if he hated the sight of it, but no sooner had he cut into it, than a noise, like the squeaking of a rat, proceeded from it, and Samson, flinging the carving knife and fork up to the ceiling, bolted across the room.

"What the—the—the—the devil is the matter?" Mr. Splitback roared, utterly unable to control his feelings and language. "Are you mad, man?"

"No, I ain't mad," Samson panted, looking at the knife which stuck quivering in a beam, "but if there aint summit alive in that there mutton I'll never touch another bit of wittles."

"Something alive in that mutton?" Mr. Splitback sneered. "Samson, I am afraid that you have been making too free with that fresh barrel of beer."

"A chap might drink the lot, and eat the cask, without feelin' any the wus," Samson retorted. "I tell you that when I cut that there leg it hollered out."

Mr. Splitback looked at Samson, and turned pale.

He had often thought that unlimited rum and beer would turn the old man's brain, and now the usher made sure that Spankington Academy possessed a lunatic.

"Don't trouble yourself to carve any more," Mr. Splitback said, kindly. "You had better go about your work."

"Wich," said Samson, "I will gladly do. But first I should like to see this bout. Jest you 'ave a go at that there leg."

Mr. Splitback had a go at it, or rather he would have done so, but before he could touch it a sharp sound issued from it, and the usher, rapidly recoiling, sat down on Miss Nobbin's lap.

"Did you hear that?" he cried, as he started to his feet. "This is very dreadful. Had we not better send for the Reverend Crawley Cringe?"

"I cannot understand it," Miss Nobbins gasped, trying hard to faint. "I—I—oh! Somebody bring my smelling bottle, or I shall die. A rat must have eaten its way into the meat."

"In that case," said Mr. Splitback, boldly, "we'll have him out."

Seizing the knuckle end of the joint, the usher dashed it against the wall, with no result but squirting a quantity of gravy into his eyes, and staining the paper, which had been put on but a few days.

Again did Mr. Splitback afflict the wall, but no rat or other animal came forth, or betrayed by a last squeak that it had departed from this vale of tears, and the usher, alarmed and utterly perplexed, returned to his chair, and sat glaring in a frightful state of mind, and miserable state of gravity.

"I'll not stop in this house another instant if this matter is not cleared up," he cried. "I will not be driven frantic in the prime of life. I will not have my hair turn grey, when—"

"Hold your row," said a gruff voice behind him.

Mr. Splitback thought it was Samson who had spoken, but the porter was not in the room, and the usher, being made aware of that fact, turned all sorts of colours.

"I will have no more of this," he gasped. "I will resign. Merciful heaven! what now?"

It was the growl of a furious dog under the table, and Mr. Splitback skipped on the chair.

"Who has brought a dog here?" he roared. "Turn the beast out!" Several boys darted

under the table, but they could find no dog, and after a pause Mr. Splitback retired from the room with his hand clasped to his brow.

Finding the Rev. Crawley Cringe dining privately, he told him of the strange proceedings, and the clergyman's face grew as black as a thunder cloud.

"I have had no such disturbances during the holidays," he said; "and it is my firm opinion that we are being hoaxed by one of the boys."

"If I could only think so," Mr. Splitback



groaned, "I should feel far more comfortable. You have read and heard that restless spirits will follow certain individuals wherever they go; we cannot get away from the fact that the visitations during the last term were fearful."

"Let us watch and wait," Cringe returned; "if the sounds are the result of mischief, we are bound to find the culprit one day or other. Go back to the dining room, and, whatever you do, don't let the boys see that you are nervous, as they will take advantage of it."

"Very well," the usher replied, despairingly, "I will do my best."

He went back, and found the boys arguing the question.

Tom Catchit, who had a happy knack of making himself at home anywhere, was holding forth in a loud voice, and kindly offering to punch anybody's head who did not agree with him, that a burglar had entered the house, and was now concealed under the floor.

"Silence all," Mr. Splitback thundered. "If I have any more of this noise I will cane you all round."

"You had better try it on," said a voice, close to the usher's ear; "we mean to do just as we like."

"How dare you talk to me like that, Peter Cobbles," Mr. Splitback cried. "Come here, sir."

"Oh! sir—please sir—I haven't opened my lips," Peter declared, in a whining tone; "I have been quiet all the time."

"If there's one thing I do detest more than another, it is a lie," Mr. Splitback said, venomously. "I shall put your name down for punishment to-morrow. If I had my mind I should have you well flogged at once."

At last something like order was restored, and Mr. Splitback gave a sigh of relief when the bell rang for school.

When Samson came into the room to clear away the things he stood with his arms folded, and thus soliloquised—

"I'll be down on 'em this time. I aint goin' to be baited like a bull and drawn like a badger by a parcel o' young warmints. If I stop here at all it will be on quite another footin', and the fust boy as interferes with me will go 'ome in sich a state as his mother won't know him."

## CHAPTER II.

THE REV. CRAWLEY CRINGE BECOMES A JUDGE OF SHEEP, AND A DOG DISPLAYS A STRONG PARTIALITY FOR BLACK CLOTH.

NOTHING worth recording occurred during the afternoon.

There were no lessons, for the boys had all they could do to hunt up their desks, and put their exercise books and other papers into proper order—a rather weary task for those who had done nothing but enjoy themselves for the past six weeks.

We all know how hard it is to go to work after a holiday.

Everything has a different aspect, and trifles we should take no notice of at ordinary times appear as obstacles not to be surmounted without much bodily and mental anguish.

Phil Catchit's books were in a terrible state; half the leaves were gone, and those that remained within the cracked and loosened covers were dog-eared, thumbed, and dirty in the extreme.

Mr. Splitback ordered a new supply for the untidy youth, and at last, when tea time came, every book was in its proper locker, and on the morrow the path of knowledge would be trodden in real earnest.

"I say," said Tom Catchit, as the boys were undressing for bed, "I suppose we are allowed to walk about the town when we like?"

"We are not allowed to do so," Happy Hal replied. "Cringe makes his own rules, and we make ours. If you like we will hunt Bully-boy up."

"That's just what I should like," Herbert Wanstead chimed in; "and we'll pay a visit to some of our old friends, just to let them see that we are still in the land of the living."

"All right," Phil Catchit said, as he curled himself up between the sheets. "But now, lads, let us go to sleep; for my own part I am awfully tired."

"You had better sleep with one eye open," Happy Hal said, "or the ghost may come down on you unawares."

"I wish you wouldn't talk about such unpleasant things," Phil gasped. "You will put all sorts of things into my head."

"That will be the first time there was anything in it then," growled cousin Tom. "Hold your tongue, if you can't talk common sense."

"If you give me any of your cheek," Phil replied, "I'll pitch a boot at you."

"Try it on. Two can play at that game."

Phil did try it on, and the boot whistled over Tom's head, and struck against the wall.

"A miss is as good as a mile," Tom said. "I am very much obliged to you, dear Phil, but as I have no wish to keep any of your property you had better take it back again."

Before Phil could duck his head under the sheets his own boot cracked smartly on the back of his head, and a shout of laughter greeted Tom's victory.

"Oh! ah! yes," Phil howled, as he rubbed his smitten cranium; "of course, you are always against me. You had better take care of yourself in the morning, Tom, for I shall be down on you like a thousand of bricks."

"Are you all right here?" growled Samson, thrusting his head in at the door. "Where is the candle?"

"Melted with grief because it was so small," Herbert Wanstead replied. "It left nothing but a few charred remains and a smell behind it."

"Then where is the candlestick?" Samson demanded, savagely. "Come, be quick and tell me, as my orders are not to stand any of your nonsense, but to come down on you sharp."

"The candlestick," Happy Hal said, "is here. Catch!"

Samson caught it, but not exactly as he wished. It spun up into the air, and alighted on the bridge of his nose, causing millions of brilliant sparks to float before his eyes.

"That's number one," Samson said. "The fust black mark goes down to 'Arry Larkhall. Wery good, if 'Arry Larkhall don't beg my parding afore ten o'clock to-morrer mornin', 'Arry Larkhall will wish that he never had been borned."

"When I beg your pardon," Hal said, laughing outright, "the man in the moon will come down and take me away for a lunatic. Clear out, if you don't want a jug of water over you."

Samson certainly did not approve of this proposition, and got on the other side of the door as quickly as possible.

"That boy," he said, shaking his fist, "is as bad as a harpy of wapeses, and hif he don't come to a hevil end I've got no heye to the future. But let him look hout, for I'm down on him."

The bell, that noisy, iron-tongued tyrant, roused the boys from dreams of home and comfort to the dismal fact that six months more must pass away before they would be again free. But boys are plucky and hopeful, and make up their minds to enjoy themselves under any circumstances.

It was the Rev. Crawley Cringe's practice to address a few words to his pupils on the second morning of each term, and on this occasion he held forth at some length, hinting that he had laid in a new stock of canes for the obstinate and unruly.

"Boys," said he, "you know how I detest corporal punishment, but rather than have the scenes of last term repeated I will break the spirits of those who offend against my rules with continual thrashing; and mark this," here he paused and glared a whole inquisition of tortures, "if I have not sufficient time to administer the necessary punishments I will employ a gentleman who will show you no mercy. I begin to see that Mr. Splitback is too easy."

"Pardon me, sir," the usher began, when Cringe warned him into silence.

"I am not speaking for the sake of discussion," he said, loftily. "I have to mention one more subject, and then I have done. Nobody will leave the playground without my permission, and anybody offending will be well

flogged and debarred from a week's recreation for each offence."

"Then some of us will have no play time at all," Happy Hal muttered, as he nudged Wanstead in the ribs. "What about hunting up Bully-boy now, dear boy?"

"Why, we'll hunt him up, of course," Wanstead replied; "what are the odds? If we stay in the playground we shall get into a scrape, so we may as well have our own way."

"Cringe means business this time," Phil Catchit said, a few hours later. "While he was talking I couldn't help wriggling, and I felt cold all down my back."

"It will turn to heat if he catches you tripping," Hal replied. "His eyes were on you all the time he was talking. I suppose you will join us in our spree, Phil; your cousin Tom is willing?"

"If he goes I suppose I must," said Phil; "but I can see plainly how it will end for me. I shall be licked out of all shape."

"So much the better," Wanstead said; "you want improving. But let us be serious. If we put up with this new rule, our lives will become unbearable; but by infringing it a few times, and showing we don't care a dump for his canes, he will get tired, and we shall have our own way."

"That is good advice," Hal returned, tilting his straw hat on to the bridge of his nose. "What says Tom Catchit?"

"Tom Catchit says that he is ready for anything."

"And so am I," said Phil; "but I only hope that I shan't catch it quite as bad as I have done. I can put up with a great deal, but when it comes to being whacked before breakfast, after dinner, and just before bed time, you must all own that a fellow gets tired of the game. But let us separate, Cringe is at his study windows, and he is looking at us."

"You are a sort of schoolboy martyr, Phil," said Hal. "Perhaps your name will be handed down to posterity."

"So will my grandmother's," Phil replied, smiling. "If I have gained any reputation, it has been from the sting of birch and cane. I only want to impress on you to be a little more careful, and not to be so rash."

The boys then separated, having decided to meet again as soon as afternoon school was over; and when that time came they slipped out one by one, assembling at the corner of the main street.

It was a treat to see how the tradesmen looked at them, not lovingly, but with glances full of defiant fire; and one man, a stout little grocer, armed himself with a mop, determined to be ready for any emergency.

They passed the "Red Lion" Inn, and Tony Tubby, the landlord, accompanied by his valiant assistant, Bob Bolter, came out to bid them welcome.

"Spankington," said the jolly old host, "aint been like the same place since you lads went away. There's been no excitement, and everything's been as dull as ditchwater."

"And you look well, Master Hal," Bob Bolter said, as he worked our hero's arm like a pump-handle. "It does my heart good to see you looking so jolly. If your dear parents could see you now, how proud they would be."

A shadow fell on Hal's face, but it was gone in an instant.

"Bob," he replied, "I never disgraced them whilst they were alive, and with God's help the memory of them will be sufficient to keep me in the right path."

"I don't want to harrow your feelings," Bob continued, "but it did strike me as peculiar that your father should die and leave no money. Them shares goes up and down in the market, I've heard, but who works 'em I don't know. Have you ever thought about 'em?"

"Often," Hal replied. "But, Bob, what can I do—I am only a boy?"

"The lawyers said there was nothing, and Cringe treated me like a beggar for a time, and you know that even now I owe all to Herbert's father, Mr. Wanstead. When I go out into the world I will work to repay him for his kindness and—"



"Marry one of his pretty daughters," Bob interrupted. "Beg pardon for taking such a liberty as saying so, but you are always uppermost in my thoughts, and I know you will forgive me. Master Hal, I had a rum sort of dream not long ago, which told me that long chap Crawley Cringe was doing you out of your money."

"I don't believe in dreams," Hal said, sighing; "if the best of any I have come true, I should not be an orphan. But then, Bob, I am not downhearted, so don't look so straight at me. We are out for the purpose of having a spree, and we want to find Bullyboy."

"Oh! he was here not long ago," Bob replied; "and what do you think he said?"

"I can't guess, but something very wise, I have no doubt."

"He said, that he would make a note of me if I served any of you with ginger beer or lemonade," Bob replied.

"And what did you tell him?"

"I told him that, if he didn't want a roll in the sawdust, he had better get into the street. So he took himself off, and the last I saw of him was ogling one of the pretty housemaids who had come from Mr. Dandy-lows on an errand."

"Come along, lads," said Hal; "the object of our search cannot be very far away. We are on the right track."

They were, and it was not long before a back view of Bullyboy, encased in a brand new uniform, hove in sight.

The instant the policeman caught sight of the boys, he produced the marvellous pocket-book and the stump end of a pencil, and, planting his back against a wall, prepared to make such notes as would bring any offending youth within the pale of the law.

"Be off!" he said, haughtily, as the boys approached. "I know your little games, and I have a magistrate's orders to put 'em down; so be off, and don't give me any of your trouble."

"Am I not allowed to walk in the street?" Hal demanded, pretending to be mightily indignant. "Is that against the law, I should like to know?"

"It aint, as long as you walk straight on."

"And may I cross over and walk on the other side?" Tom Catchit asked.

"You may," Bullyboy replied.

"Is it an offence to walk in the middle of the road?" Herbert Wanstead said. "Of course I am too young to understand much about it, therefore I ask for information."

"You'll get something more than information presently," Bullyboy gasped, beginning to turn pale with rage. "Take yourselves off, or I'll make such a note as'll make every mother's son tremble in your shoes."

"Wait a minute," Phil Catchit cried; "now, supposing that I were to take into my head to run along the pavement, would that—?"

Bullyboy unbuckled his belt, and made a run at the presumptuous youth, but, alas for the uncertainty of life, the constable had not made half a dozen paces before he was sprawling in the road.

He went down on his stomach with a noise which sounded like "waght," and for some seconds he laid squirming and wriggling like some huge specimen of a blue eel.

"Who tripped me hap?" he roared, as he struggled to his feet. "Give me that boy's name, and I'll make him suffer according to the laws of Queen and country."

"You're a button short," Phil said, calmly. "Look about for it; it's a bright one, and you can't miss seeing it."

"I'll 'ave your wile young life," Bullyboy shrieked, as he recovered his pocket-book and pencil. "If I had my mind I'd 'ave you roasted afore a slow fire. Oh, my inside!"

"Shall we help you to carry them home?" Tom Catchit asked, smiling sweetly.

The blue turned indigo in his rage, but seeing that he had no chance with the boys, he retired from the scene, growling like a bear with a sore head.

"That's number one to us," Hal said. "I wonder if Cringe has missed any of us. I say, Phil, I don't want to make you feel uncomfort-

able, but something tells me that we shall see him presently."

The Rev. Crawley Cringe, suspecting that the boys were hatching up some kind of mischief, in the morning set Samson to watch them. The porter's services, however, were not required, for suddenly the brothers Cobbles went hand in hand to the schoolmaster's study, and reported that they had seen Happy Hal pass through the school gates.

The learned gentleman, fairly boiling over with wrath, rose at once to go in search of the delinquents.

"Am I to be defied almost before the words of warning are out of my lips?" he gasped, as he banged his hat upon his head. "No; I will either conquer or give up the school. I should have more peace of mind if I broke stones for my living."

Pushing the youthful Cobbles on one side, he thrust his umbrella under his arm, and, darting across the playground with the swiftness of a dragon fly, tore madly into the street.

The very first person he met was Bullyboy, who was leaning against a lamp-post, cleaning the mud from his uniform.

"Have you seen any of my boys?" Crawley Cringe demanded.

"Have I seen any of your boys?" Bullyboy repeated. "Yes, I 'ave. I've felt 'em, too. Look at the pickle I'm in. Mister Cringe, if you—"

"Don't talk to me now," Crawley Cringe interrupted. "What direction did the troublesome urchins take?"

"I left 'em at the bottom of the street," Bullyboy replied; "but where they are now I don't know, and I don't care. There'll be some-thing worth putting in the newspapers if these sort of games go on."

"I'll flay them alive," Crawley Cringe spluttered. "I'll whip them till they don't know whether they are on their heads or their heels."

So saying, he was off again before Bullyboy could utter another word; and so blind was he in his rage that, before he could check himself or turn back, he found himself struggling in the middle of a flock of sheep.

"Where be you goin' to?" the driver, a grinning yokel, yelled. "Get out of the way, you fule, can't you?"

The Rev. Crawley Cringe couldn't! The sheep leapt over each other's back, and ran through the suffering gentleman's legs, but presently another animal appeared on the scene.

This was a fine specimen of a shepherd's dog, who, obedient to his instinct, rushed to lend the sheep driver assistance.

"Put 'em up," the fellow roared, rattling his stick in his hat. "Good dog, put 'em up."

Whether the sagacious animal misunderstood the man's command, or was bent on doing a little business on his own account, is not to be got at, but it is certain that he went straight at the Rev. Crawley Cringe and sent a double row of sharp teeth through that gentleman's nether garments.

"Oh! lor!" Cringe shrieked. "Call the dog off. He is worrying me to death."

"Take the dog off yourself," the man replied; "he don't belong to me."

The Rev. Crawley Cringe was in a dreadful predicament, and as he struck at the collie with his umbrella a dense perspiration, the result of fear, rained down his face.

"Will nobody help me?" he cried. "For mercy's sake, good people, come to my assistance."

Even as he spoke his eyes fell on his truant scholars, and I regret to say that they stood not far distant, and not only smiling, but laughing outright; and almost at the same moment the dog, apparently satisfied, departed with one of the learned gentleman's coat tails, and a piece of the seat of his inexpressibles about the size of a cheese plate.

Cringe, however, thought little of being thus ventilated; all he wanted to do was to catch the boys.

They did not run away from him, but stood holding their sides to keep down a second fit of laughter.

(To be continued.)

## THE BLUE JACKETS OF OLD ENGLAND;

*Or, The Flag That's Braved a Thousand Years.*

### CHAPTER XLIII.

#### WILL'S STORY.

"Fill up, Dick," said Will, "and I will tell you what connection Roderick Stone has with our family."

Dick filled his glass, and passed the bottle. Will filled his, and, after a couple of whiffs at his cigar, began his story:—

"Admiral Neville," he said, "is my uncle. That is the true relationship between us. He married a little late in life, and had two children—a son and daughter. His wife died in giving birth to the latter, and he was left alone with his little ones."

"Of the boy he was passionately fond, and perhaps spoilt him a little. The boy grew up wayward, wild, and ungovernable. While in his teens he kicked over the traces to a ruinous extent, and was expelled from a public school for striking the head master. He had plenty of pluck, and, in that sense, his ruin was worked by the blow he gave, for no other public school would receive him."

"The admiral was called away on active service, and left his son in the care of a Mr. Stone, the father of the Roderick whom I have been in pursuit of. He was a trainer of refractory youths, and, like many of his class, was perhaps the worst governor of his own household you could find among a numerous community."

"Of all the refractory spirits beneath his roof his son was the worst. Roderick led the mischief makers and the rebellion, openly defied his father, broke the laws of his house, and led away even those who were disposed to go right. Among those who were easily led was Nigel Neville, my cousin."

"I do not know the whole history of the affairs between them—what they did does not matter; but in the end a bill was presented at a certain bank with the name of a well-known nobleman forged upon it. The possession of it was then traced to my cousin, and there stopped. When called upon for an explanation he said he would give one in the morning; but that night he walked out of the house, and was seen no more until his dead body was found floating in the canal."

"The general assumption was that Nigel had committed the forgery; but the admiral would not believe it. I do not believe it; for with all his faults—all his sins and transgressions—my cousin had the feelings of our family in him, and was honourable to the core. A few words in his pocket-book, referring to his connection with Roderick Stone, confirmed our doubt; but we could prove nothing, for Roderick, too, was gone, and until I met him in charge of the Russian privateer which we destroyed I did not come across him."

"But why have you taken charge of the business?" asked Dick.

"I love Minnie, Nigel's sister," replied Will, and the admiral promised her to any man who could clear the name of his son. "Minnie loves me and bade me do it. So it happens I am here."

"You may find it difficult to carry out your purpose," said Dick.

"Yes," replied Will, "but there is a divinity that shapes our ends—rough-hew them how we will—and I fancy Mr. Roderick Stone's end will finally be shaped as it ought to be. I have a presentiment come now that the end is at hand."

"Do you believe in presentiments?"

"Yes; I have known so many to be fulfilled. Pass the bottle."

"I have heard of people knowing the very time they are going to die," said Dick, as he complied with the wish of his friend; "and the Sandwich Islander makes up his mind to depart at a certain hour, and does it."

"So they say. But is that true?"

"I believe," said Dick, "if you make up your mind to do anything you will do it."

(To be continued.)



## ANCIENT BRITISH ARMS AND WARLIKE CUSTOMS.

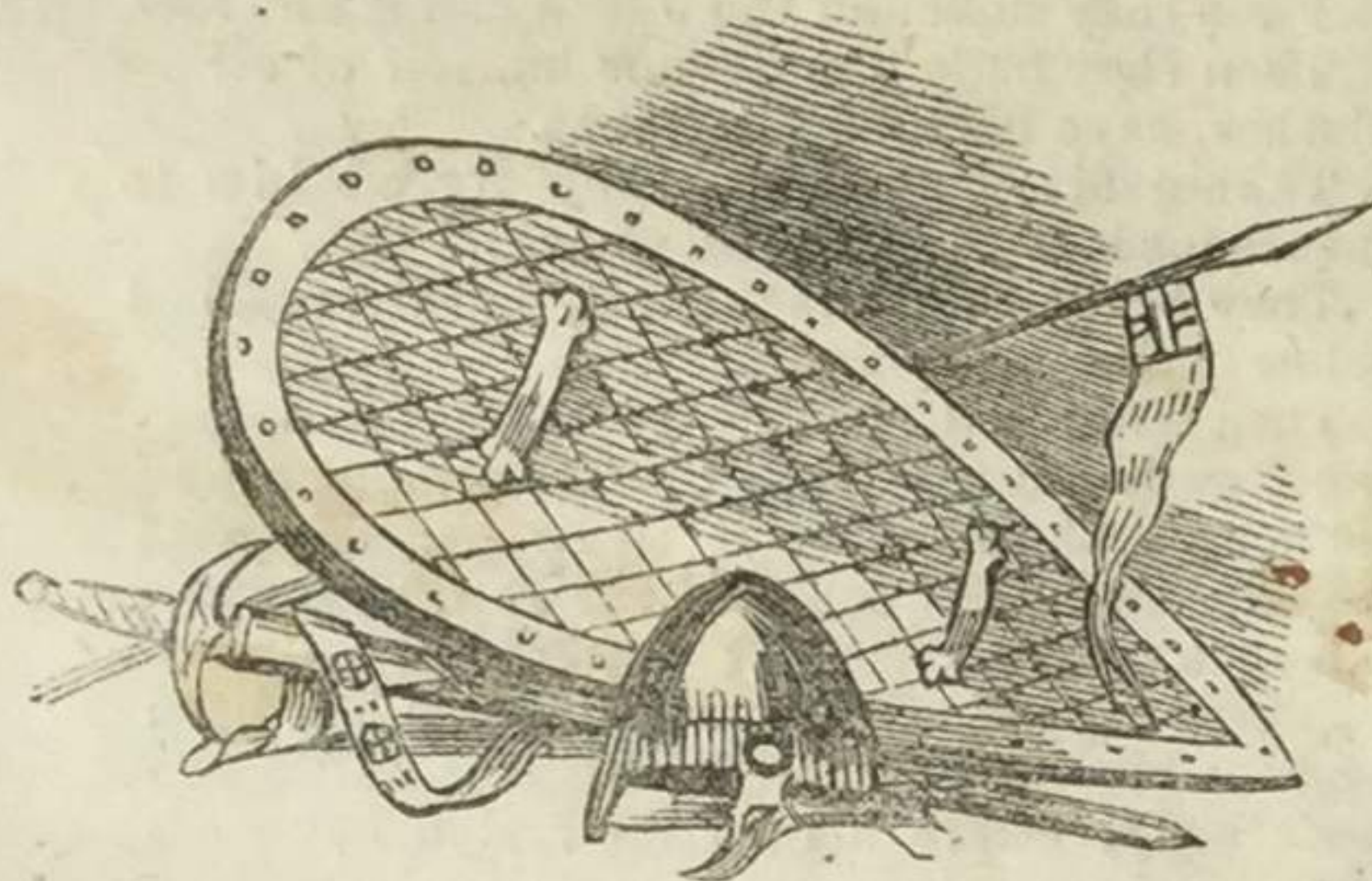
AS we intend devoting a special article to the use of the long bow in a future number, we need only say that it was considered one of the most healthful and invigorating exercises in the days of our forefathers, when the modern apparatus of the gymnasium were unknown.

The health-giving effects of roving, flight-shooting, &c., are calculated to give strength to the muscles, not only of the arms, but also of the legs, back, chest, and loins, for it should be observed that our forefathers at least did not shoot "wyth strength of armes as other nations do, but wyth strength of body," as says the old Latimer in one of his sermons.

In speaking a few words upon the exercise of—

### ROVING,

we must explain that the archers rambled over heath and field, selecting some tree or other object for their mark, which, if judiciously chosen, will give excellent practice, as it also accustoms the eye to measure distances; they also acquired the art of drawing a much stronger bow.



NORMAN ARMS (RUFUS).

Dr. Robert Ascham, in his "Toxophilus," says: "Some men wonder wye in casting a man's eye at the marke a man's hand should go straighte, but surely if he considers the nature of a man's eye he would not wonder at it. The eye is the very tongue with which witte and reason doth speake to every part of the body. This is most evident in fencing and feighting. The foot, the hand, and all wayteth upon the eye."

A famous poet, too, in the praise of archery, has written:—

This healthful game it pleases all,  
The mind to joy it raises high,  
And throws off all diseases prone,  
To idle luxury.

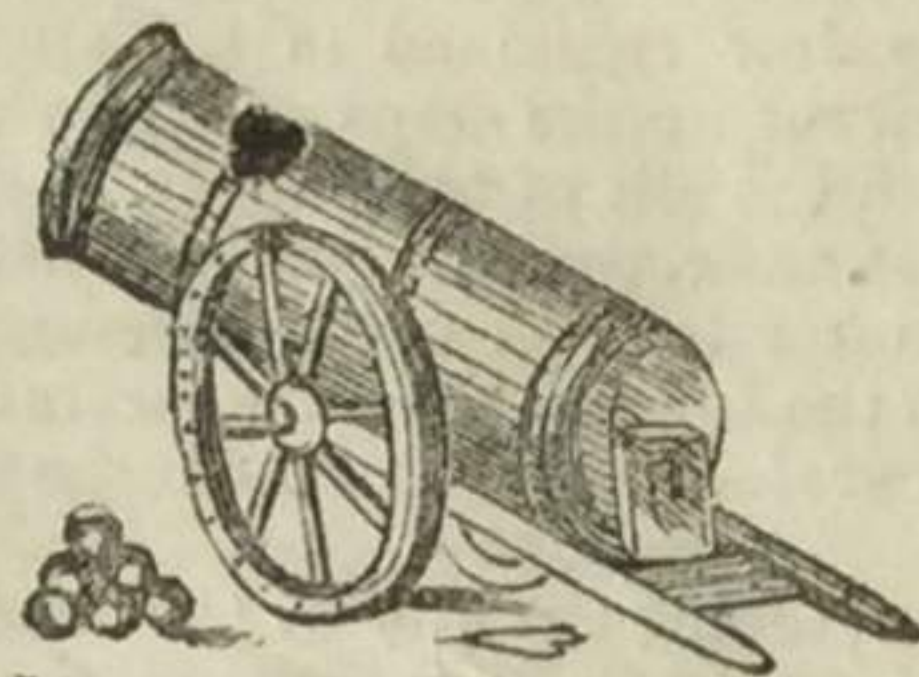
In the days of Crecy and Agincourt the champion weapon was the stout yew bow. With it our heroes did prodigious feats.

Even in the days when Alfred was harassed by the Danish invaders, and he had to flee before his pursuers and seek refuge, disguised as a common Saxon soldier, in a place called Ethlingey, afterwards known as Princes Island, then a morass in Somersetshire, formed by the confluence of the Thone and Parret, the bow and arrow were a terror to the enemy, and stood in great repute. The following story of King Alfred will not be uninteresting to many of our readers:—

Having met with a swineherd and fisherman in the above mentioned place, Danulph took compassion on him and concealed him in the hut, where he was most hospitably treated. But one day, when the wife of Danulph had need to be absent, she desired him to see after the baking of some bread-cakes, which he promised to do, but, when the good dame's back was turned, Alfred busied with his bows and arrows, and filled with solemn and high-reaching thoughts, neglected the cakes and permitted them to

burn, which so annoyed the good dame on her return that she chided him severely for his negligence.

The crossbow was also a favourite weapon with the ancients, the Normans especially, who made the bows of their crossbows of steel, and so powerful were they, or some of them, that



ANCIENT CANNON.

they had to be strung with a winch, affixed to the side of the stock.

This terrible engine, as it was considered at that date, hurled bolts of iron from the battlements and did fearful execution amongst the besiegers, but the long bows and arrows sped three missiles to their one, and thus made up for the deficiency.

In our last we promised to give a fuller account of the trial by battle, or camp-fight. If the crime to be judged was deserving of death, then was the camp-fight for life or death; the accused and the accuser both being equally armed, and either on horseback or on foot.

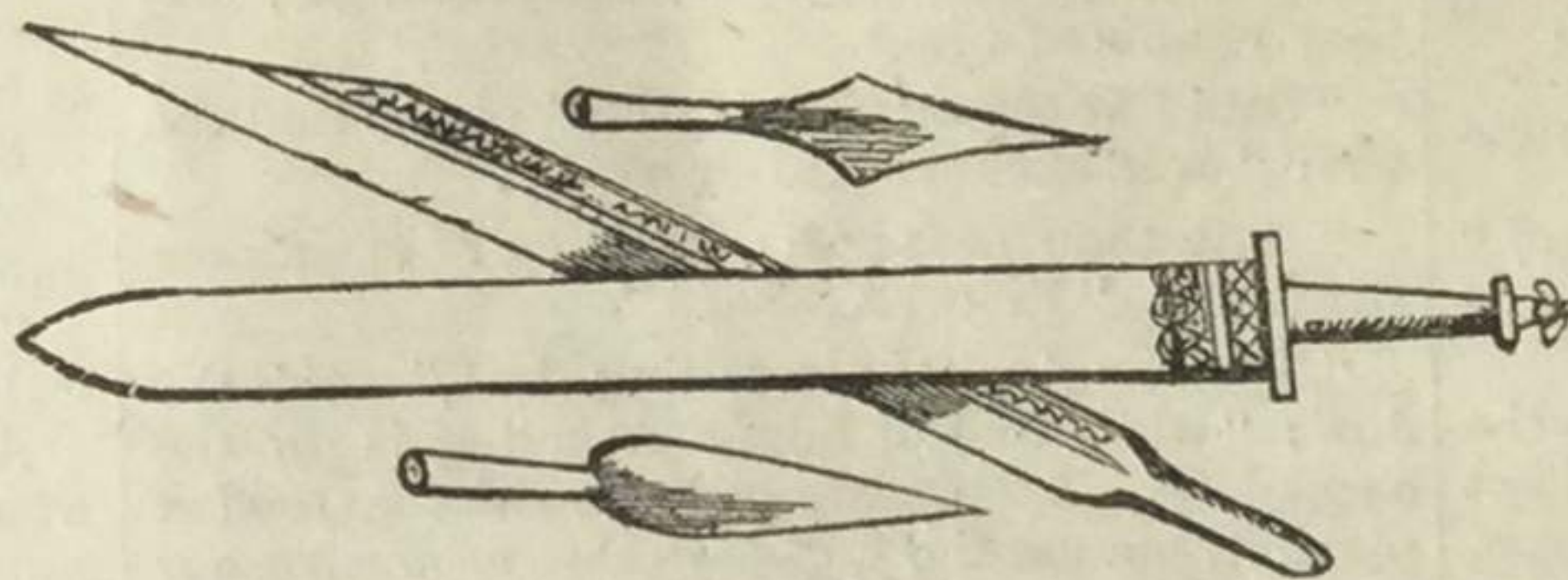
If the offence deserved imprisonment only, then was the camp-fight accomplished when the one had subdued the other by making him yield, or unable to defend himself, and so be taken prisoner.

The accused had the privilege of appointing another in his stead, but the accuser must perform it in his own person, and with equality of weapons.

No women were permitted to behold it, nor male children under thirteen years. The priests and people that were spectators, silently prayed that the victory would fall upon the guiltless, and a bier stood ready to carry away the body of him who was slain.

None of the people might cry or shriek out, or make any noise, or show any signs of encouragement on either side, and the rules were so strict that an executioner stood by the side of the judges, ready with an axe to cut off the right hand and left foot of the party so offending. He that yielded was then at the mercy of the victor, to be killed or to be let live. If he were slain, he was carried away and honourably buried; and he that slew him reputed more honourable than before; but if, being overcome, he was left alive, then he was declared void of all honest reputation, and never to ride on horseback, nor to carry arms.

In this page we also give an engraving of the clumsy kind of cannon which was used upon the first introduction of gunpowder into the art of warfare. It was merely a wooden tube, hooped



SAXON ARMS.

round at intervals with iron; an iron box at the breech served as a receptacle for the gunpowder, in which was a touch-hole by which the charge was fired.

The arms we have engraved are those of the Norman and Saxon soldiery of various periods, one group representing the short sword of the Saxons in its sheath, and a kind of bill-hook shaped like a creese, with spear heads of two different shapes. These two ancient Saxon

swords were copied from the originals, the one of which was found in the Isle of Wight, and the other in the Thames.

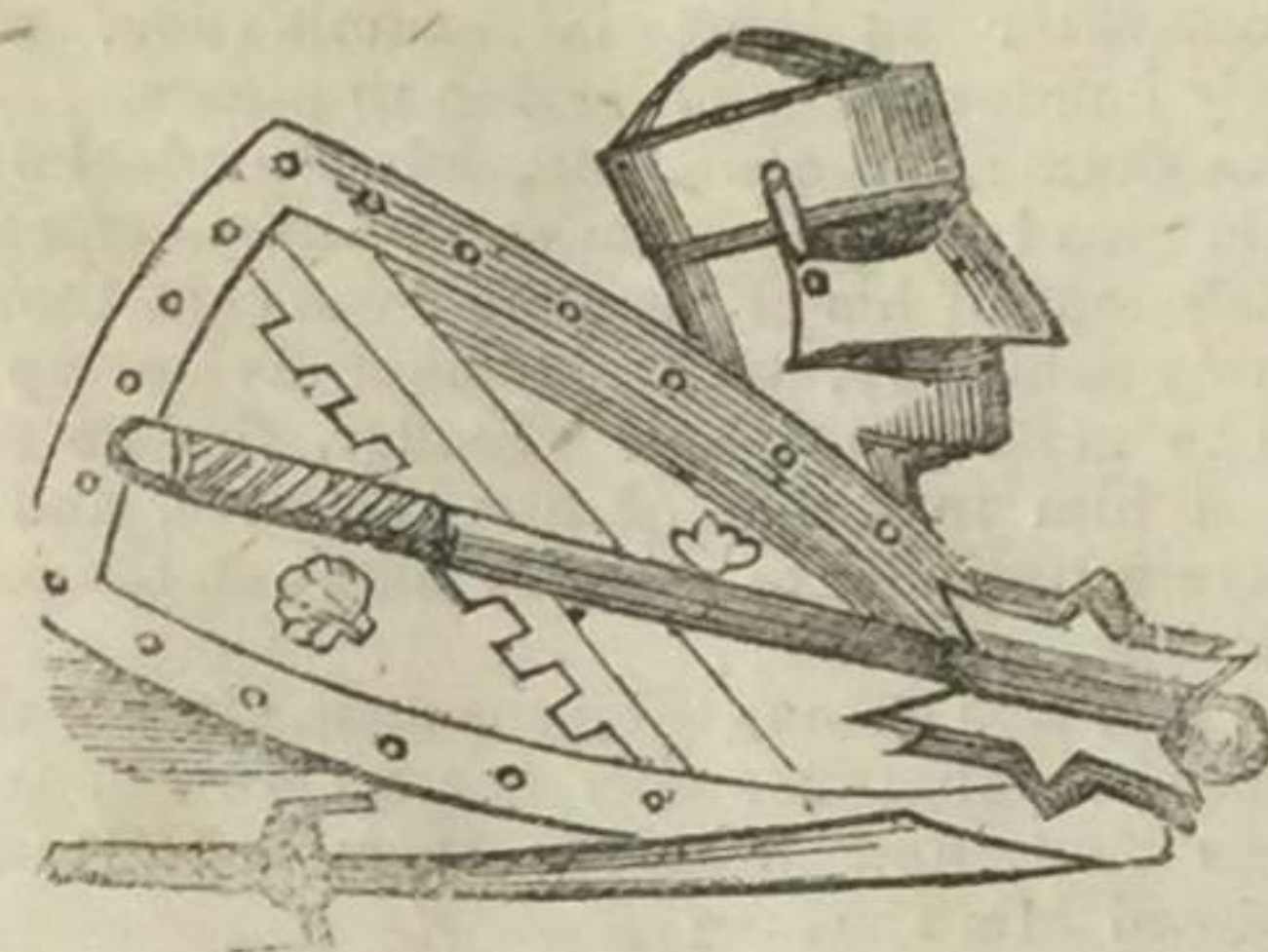
Another group describes the shields and pennoned lance of a Norman foot-soldier of the period of William Rufus, with the cross-handled sword, worn both on foot and horseback; the other group shows the oblong pointed shield of the period of Henry II., made of wrought-iron plate, mostly burnished, and emblazoned with the armorial bearings of the owners, who were barons or nobles. A helmet of polished steel, with a vizor that fell down and covered the upper portion of the face, was fastened to the upper parts by means of leathern straps, which also answered the purposes of hinges.

The Norman mace shown in this group is composed of six or eight axe-like blades, fixed in an iron shaft so that the blades point out in different directions, and was a terrible weapon in the hands of those stalwart barons.

The last object described in this group is a short sword of the scimitar form, usually worn as a dagger.

### TURN AND TURN ABOUT.

A TINKER was travelling in a country town, and, having traversed many miles without finding anything to do, he stopped, weary and hungry, at a tavern.



NORMAN ARMS (HENRY II.).

He got into conversation with a glazier, to whom he related his troubles.

The latter sympathised with him deeply; and, telling him he should have a job before long, advised him to go in to his dinner, and eat heartily.

The tinker took his advice, ate his fill, and when he returned to the bar-room he was overjoyed to hear that the landlord required his services to mend a lot of pans and kettles, which had suddenly "sprung a leak."

The tinker was at once set to work, accomplished the task, received a liberal sum in payment, and started on his way rejoicing.

Upon reaching the outside of the house, he found the glazier, who told him how it was done.

The tinker, with many thanks, and a heart full of gratitude, resumed his journey; but he had not proceeded many yards before he reached the village church, when a bright idea struck him.

The church, he thought, could afford to bear a slight loss in a good cause; so, taking a position where he could not be seen, he riddled every window in the edifice with stones; and then, highly elated with the exploit, retraced his steps to notify the glazier he would speedily have an important job.

"I have broken every pane of glass in the church," said the tinker; "and you of course will be employed to put them in again."

The glazier's jaw fell, and his face assumed a blank expression, as he said, in a tremulous tone—

"You don't mean that, do you?"

"Certainly," replied the tinker; "there isn't a whole pane of glass in the building. One good turn deserves another, you know."

"Yes," answered the glazier, in a tone of utter despair; "but, you wretch! you have ruined me, for I keep the church windows in repair by the year."



## ORIENTAL JUSTICE.

A GROCER of the city of Smyrna had a son, who, with the help of the little learning the country could afford, rose to the post of naib, or deputy of the cadi, or magistrate, and as such visited the markets, and inspected the weights and measures of all retail dealers.

One day, as this officer was going his rounds, the neighbours, who knew enough of his father's character to suspect that he might stand in need of the caution, advised him to move his weights, for fear of the worst; but the old cheat, depending on his relation to the inspector, and sure, as he thought, that his son would not expose him to a public affront, laughed at their advice, and stood very calmly at his shop door, waiting for his coming.

The naib, however, was well assured of the dishonesty and unfair dealing of his father, and resolved to detect his villainy and make an example of him.

Accordingly he stopped at the door, and said coolly to him—

"Good man, fetch out your weights, that we may examine them."

Instead of obeying him, the grocer would fain have put it off with a laugh, but was soon convinced his son was serious, by hearing him order the officers to search his shop, and seeing them produce the instruments of his fraud, which, after an impartial examination, were openly condemned and broken to pieces.

His shame and confusion, however, he hoped would plead with a son to excuse him all farther punishment of his crime; but even this, though entirely arbitrary, the naib made as severe as for the most indifferent offender, for he sentenced him to a fine of fifty piastres, and to receive a bastinado of as many blows on the soles of his feet.

All this was executed on the spot, after which the naib, leaping from his horse, threw himself at his feet, and watering them with tears, addressed him thus:—

"Father, I have discharged my duty to my God, my sovereign, and my country, as well as my station; permit me now, by my respect and submission, to acquit the debt I owe a parent."


This done, he mounted his horse again, and then continued his journey, amidst the acclamations and praises of the whole city for so extraordinary a piece of justice; reports of which being made to the Sultan, he advanced him to the post of cadi; from whence, by degrees, he rose to the dignity of mufti, who is at the head of both religion and law among the Turks.

## EDGAR ATHELING.

## PART II.—OUTLAWED.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## THE JEW'S DILEMMA—PLOTING REVENGE.

E must return now to the house of Moses Isaacs, the Jew.

Alone now with his visitor, he lowered his voice.

"Well," he said, "let me hear the watch-word."

"The King and Freedom! And yours?"

"Moonlight!"

"Good! then come with me."

"Why should I come with thee?" said the Jew. "Do I not know the 'Bull' Inn? Have I not been before to meet thee—wherefore, Brandon, can I not come again, alone?"

"Because," answered the visitor, "our waiting friends are not there now; but, as our present business is secret and important, we have thought it best to choose a more private place. Lose no time, therefore, but let us be away."

The Jew retired to an adjoining chamber, to put on his walking gabardine over the clothes he wore at home.

Quickly returning, he announced his readiness to start, and together they left for the rendezvous of the conspirators.

In another portion of the town, in one of the many low streets, stood a half-ruined tenement. The roof had fallen partially in, and altogether the house had a forlorn, tumble-down appearance. Not a light was to be seen at any of the windows.

Not a sound gave token of the presence of any living being in the house.

Brandon and the Jew having arrived at the door, the Jew remained in the street, whilst Brandon went up the steps and gave a peculiar knock with the hilt of his dagger.

This was answered by some one inside.

The countersign was again exchanged. Brandon called the Jew, the door was carefully opened, and as carefully closed when the two had entered.

Brandon, taking the Jew by the hands, groped his way along the dark passage in the wake of his conductor.

A flight of some ten or twelve steps was descended, then a long passage was traversed, another flight of stairs was ascended, a knock was given at the door of a chamber, a burst of light flooded the landing, and the two entered an apartment in which sat two more of the conspirators.

To judge from the empty bottles and glasses that stood on the table, they had been indulging in a carouse; and from their flushed faces it was also evident that their potations had been deep and frequent.

One of the two seated at the table was dressed in the motley garb, and carried the bauble that was the insignia of his profession.

He was the fool or wit, as it was called, in the employ of Sir Simon Clifford, a large landed proprietor in the neighbourhood.

Sir Simon was just at that time with the army of the king, his master.

His master being away, the fool was of course at liberty to employ his time as he chose, and he chose to enjoy himself.

The man who had opened the street-door of the house and the other occupant of the apartment were the other conspirators who had been engaged in the assassination of the governor of Nottingham Castle.

As soon as the door was closed behind them, the fool invited the Jew to seat himself at the table and join them in a stoup of wine.

This of course he refused to do.

"Ah!" exclaimed the fool; "the dog of a Jew refuses to drink with a Christian, eh? Yet will I wager my bauble to a groat that he would not refuse to eat savoury pork, did we but call it mutton."

"Silence thy ribald tongue," said Brandon, "for a bit; we have business to transact, and brook not intrusion now."

The Jew seated himself at the table, but did not join in the carouse.

"Isaacs," said Brandon, "repeat now to our comrades what you told me as we came through the streets."

"I did but say, gentlemen," replied Moses, "that it mattered not to us what side we assisted, so long as we get paid."

At this the conspirators looked at one another. Brandon made a sign with his forefinger, and they remained silent.

"Still like thy accursed tribe," ejaculated the wit; "ever hankering after money."

"Wilt thou cease thy prattling?" exclaimed Brandon. "Proceed, Isaacs."

"The King's cause is failing fast," said the Jew; "while that of Edgar Atheling is in the ascendant. I therefore propose that, instead of plotting against the latter, we assist the governor in what I know to be his design of opening the gates of the city to his army."

"And pray what do you propose to get us for our treachery?" demanded Brandon.

"A thousand marks," said the Jew; "to be equally divided between us."

"Then thou wouldst have us turn traitors to our sworn allegiance to the king," said one of the other conspirators. "This is too much for a soldier to bear. Death to the dog of a Jew."

"Death to him!" exclaimed they all, in one breath.

Daggers were drawn, and they jumped from their seats.

It would have gone hard with poor Isaacs had not the fool, at this juncture, suddenly exclaimed, shaking his bauble—

"Hold, my masters, let me have my say. The Jew dare not betray us. For, knowing where he resides, his life is always in our hands."

"True," replied Brandon, "but what of that?"

"Listen," answered the fool. "I propose that we hold him up to ridicule. Let us dress him in some extraordinary way, keep him safely here all night, and then dismiss him to his home in the broad light of day."

In the present state of the four men, who had not yet drunk wine enough to be bad-tempered, this proposition met their approbation.

They set about discussing various projects, and at length found one to suit them all.

No sooner had they become unanimous in their opinion than they returned to their drinking.

This lasted far into the night.

Having at last satisfied themselves, they first tightly bound the Jew, then lay them down to sleep.

The sun was shining brightly when they awoke.

Now they commenced to carry out their plan. First they unbound the Jew's hands and feet.

Then they bade him denude himself of all his clothes, save his under garment.

Taking his gabardine, they forced him to thrust his legs through the sleeves.

They being, of course, short, hardly reached below his knee.

Then the fool, hastily twisting up a hay-band, gathered the skirts of the garment round his neck, and fastening it there securely with the hay-band, thus enclosed the Jew, as it were, in a sack.

Taking a portion of the rope, which had been used for binding him, he fastened it round the Jew's body, where his wrists rested upon his hips.

He now had the appearance of an armless man with naked legs.

Loud shouts of laughter greeted his appearance.

"Now," exclaimed the fool, "concoct a head-dress."

Another portion of the Jew's clothing was now brought into requisition.

Tearing it into slips, the fool proceeded to knot the ends together, thus forming a long length of linen.

He now took two of the leather bottles which had contained the wine.

Giving one to each of his two companions, he bade them hold them—one against each of the Jew's ears.

Then, taking the long strip of linen he had already prepared, he bound them quickly and tightly several times round his head—thus securing the bottles in their place.

He was now sufficiently apparelled even to suit their fancy, until the fool suddenly exclaimed—

"What! send him home tailless. Never shall it be said that work half finished left our hands."

So saying, he quickly twisted up another hayband, and fastening it to the back of the gabardine, he declared his work complete.

"Now walk," cried Brandon; "vile traitor, walk, and add to our amusement."

Amidst roars of jeering laughter, poor Isaacs, who had never spoken one single word, paraded round and round the room.

At length Brandon exclaimed—

"Enough, enough! Open the door and descend the stairs! Quicker, quicker," he added, as the unhappy victim slowly struggled towards the door.

"Hasten his movements by the application of your dagger points," exclaimed the fool.

"Good thought!" they all rejoined.

Drawing their weapons, they pricked and goaded the miserable man until the tears of mingled agony and rage coursed down his furrowed cheeks.

Arrived at the street door, the four con-



spirators thrust the Jew into the open air, and, closing the portal behind them, commenced to revile him.

"Look!" shouted one, speaking to a number of people who soon collected round. "Look! see this wretched Jew! He came prowling round our house in search of what he could lay his hands on. We caught him in the act."

"Yes," said another; "we have taken the law into our own hands."

"Right," said one of the crowd; "a proper way to serve a paltry, thieving member of the accursed race."

"Let us pelt him with dirt," was shouted by another.

"A good idea," said the fool; "but mind where you hit him. Don't destroy his beautiful long ears."

"No," rejoined a wit among the crowd; "because they prove all Jews are not dogs—for this one is an ass."

"Aye," answered the jester; "not only ass, but this one is a fool—to be caught in his thieving acts."

Missiles were quickly at hand for their purpose.

The unhappy creature, running, or rather trotting, as well as his abnormal costume would permit, fled towards his home, followed by this jeering, laughing, shouting crowd.

During the whole of this time he had never spoken a word, but was vowing vengeance in his heart for his cruel treatment.

Arrived at his house he managed at length to creep in at the back door and rid himself of his persecutors.

The first person that he met on his entrance was young Mordecai.

His ludicrous appearance prevented Joseph from recognising his friend, and he exclaimed—

"Whom have we here? What masquerading foolery is this? Get thee hence, and dress thyself properly ere thou darrest to come here, or I will teach thee better manners."

The poor old man had only strength enough to answer—

"I am thy friend, Moses Isaacs, dear Joseph; I will explain all to thee when I have slept awhile."

Throwing himself on to a couch, he was quickly asleep.

During his nap, which was sufficiently sound to permit of it, Mordecai unbound his friend's head, and removed his objectionable appendages.

A servant fetched some water, and Rebecca procured fresh clothes for him to put on when he awoke.

This soon occurred, and, having dressed and refreshed himself, he sat down with Mordecai, and told him the events of the past night.

"The wretches!" exclaimed Mordecai; "but we will have a deep and dire revenge. Tell me their names."

"I know the names of but two of them," returned Isaacs; "one is named Brandon, a villainous desperado in the service of the king; the other is the fool belonging to Sir Simon Clifford."

"What was he doing with such men as you describe Brandon to be?" asked Joseph.

"His master is away with the army," replied Isaacs; "and he is at liberty to do as he pleases meanwhile; it was he who proposed to dress me as you saw me."

"Revenge on him you can easily obtain," said Mordecai.

"How so?" rejoined his friend.

"Is not his master, Sir Simon Clifford, deeply in your debt?" queried Joseph.

"Truly he is," answered the other.

"Demand then," resumed Mordecai, "demand justice, and his punishment for this gross outrage, or swear that you will foreclose the mortgages you hold on his estates, and keep your word."

"Good!" replied Isaacs; "it shall be done. So much for one of my tormentors; but what about Brandon and the others?"

"Let us sit down," said Mordecai, "and think that over. The revenge must be terrible."

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## THE HAUNTED DUNGEON ONCE MORE.

It was on the road towards Nottingham that, on hearing of the large royal armament which was collected to meet him, and of the upsetting of the whole scheme by which it had been hoped that the gates of the town would be opened to him, Edgar Atheling thought it better to leave Zeila behind him.

At any rate until the first battle was over.

At a little cottage on the edge of a moor near the town, and nearly on the skirts of Mansfield Forest, lived two persons—man and wife.

They were a well-assorted couple, though as ill-looking a pair as were ever seen.

They were both about the age of forty, and had no children.

For years they had lived on the same spot, and during all this time no one had ever known how they obtained their living.

Certainly at times Hugh Marsden was often seen returning from the woods laden with the spoils of the chase.

But otherwise he had no visible means of subsistence.

He was a dark, sinister-looking man, with a savage, brutal face, his large and ill-shaped mouth being only toned down by the heavy beard and moustache which covered it.

His wife was a woman of pale and meagre face, though her form was large and stoutly built, and her muscular development evidently of the strongest.

It was to this couple that Edgar was recommended an asylum for Zeila during the great battle which was about to ensue.

He certainly did not like their appearance.

But there was no help for it.

There was in fact no time to be lost; and so, depending on the kind words which fell from the woman's mouth, and the civility of the man in spite of his rude appearance, he agreed that she should stop with them till the first battle should have decided which way the tide of war was to turn at first.

"She must not keep on the attire which she now wears," said Edgar, "for I fear that in that case she would stand the chance of being betrayed."

"Certainly," replied the woman. "There will be no difficulty in regard to clothes. I have plenty."

The bargain was soon struck.

Edgar paid them in advance for their services, and the young bride was soon separated from her husband and left with strangers.

Escorting Zeila into the inner room, where she could redress herself, the woman returned in a moment to the side of her husband.

"Hugh," she said, in a low voice, "she can have the dress worn by that lady—you know whom I mean—the one who last took a voyage to the old mill."

The man nodded, but at the same time made a warning sign.

"I understand you," he said, "but I have an idea—so be careful."

A grim smile overspread the face of the woman, and she hurried up a narrow staircase which led to an upper room.

Here she soon selected a long flowing robe of some whitetexture which had evidently belonged to some person of good quality.

In trying it on Zeila found that it fitted her exactly; and glad indeed was she to remove the garb which had kept her under such restraint.

Early on the evening of the day on which she had been left at the cottage, Zeila, tired out with the events of the last few days, retired to her room.

It was the chamber above that was assigned to her.

It was an ill-looking one.

She had in fact a good expanse of country to glance over.

She could see the wide moorland, and the forest beyond, and the sparkling waters of the Trent.

Though in no way dissatisfied by the place assigned to her, she yet felt unable to sleep.

And, indeed, though she had been left there

by her own brave young husband, she did not feel inclined to undress.

At length, however, this feeling was just passing away, and she had decided to yield to the wishes of Edgar, when she heard eager voices below, and then a light appeared through a clink in the floor.

Some presentiment entered her brain at once that she was concerned in what was happening.

Kneeling down she listened.

Through the chink in the floor she could hear plainly all that passed.

"Gurtha," said the man, addressing the evil-faced woman, "you saw the jewels that this girl had on."

"I did."

"They must be ours."

The woman shuddered.

"She seemed too beautiful to kill," said she, with a sigh.

The man scowled fiercely.

"Nay, then; if you are beginning to be squeamish," said he, "there is an end of it. I must find some one who is not so particular. The jewels she wears upon that page's dress are worth a king's ransom."

The woman turned her head away a moment. Even her hard heart had been touched by Zeila's wondrous beauty.

But greed prevailed.

She was not accustomed to give way to her feelings, and when she did so she did not allow them to overcome her long.

"Go on then, Hugh," she said; "but let me have as little to do with it as possible."

"I will do the deed," said Hugh, with a diabolical chuckle. "You need on this occasion have nothing to do with it. But I want no struggling, lest her cries should call the attention of some stray traveller. We will wait until midnight."

"It will be better," said Gurtha; "for I thought but now I heard her stir above. A woman who loves a man as she seems to love him would not die without a strong struggle for life."

Zeila eagerly drank in the words which showed what fate was reserved for her.

But she did not despair.

She had heard the words which the woman had let fall, and they called back to her mind the great love which Edgar bore her.

At any risk she must escape.

At that house she was in terrible danger, and there seemed, indeed, no chance of escape.

But anywhere else she had a chance of meeting with Edgar, or at least of hearing from him, or of him.

She had heard the neighing of horses, in the stable at the rear of the little hut or cottage, and she at once settled upon a plan which, though somewhat desperate, seemed to offer some hope of escape quickly.

She gently and cautiously opened her window, and looked out upon the yard.

Underneath the casement was an outhouse, the roof of which slanted downwards towards the yard.

By getting out upon this, she could slide down, and drop, and, taking the horse from the stable, ride off anywhere—so long as she placed a good distance between her and her murderous enemies.

Fortune favoured her.

The window made no noise.

She stepped out carefully.

There was only the drop which was of any difficulty to her, because of course she knew not the depth, and was, moreover, in danger of making a noise.

However, good luck favoured her.

She reached the ground in safety, for she slid off the thatched roof without a sound, and in an instant was at the door of the stable.

This was only fastened with a latch, and she had soon secured a horse.

He was a quiet animal, though a fine and stalwart one; and it took her but a little time and coaxing to saddle and bridle him, and prepare for her journey.

The night was of course very dark as she issued forth from the back door of the stable; and she knew not her way.





"DO YOU SEEK CONCEALMENT?" CRIED THE FORESTER.

But, as I have said before, it was anywhere—anywhere out of the place she was in.

Strangely enough her route took her in the direction of the ruined tower.

When she arrived in the vicinity of this she heard that she was pursued.

Pursued, too, by one who knew the way through the forest well, and who could go at full speed where she could only feel her way.

She tried her best, however.

Urging her horse at fullest speed, she came suddenly to a spot where three roads diverged from a clearing.

Here she saw, standing near a tree, a man in the dress of a forester.

"Which way, my master?" she cried. "I am in deadly peril."

"You seek a place of concealment?" he answered, hurriedly.

"I do," she cried; "pray tell me of one."

"Onwards," he said, "turn to the right, and then along the great avenue of beech trees. There you will see in front of you a tall tower. Turn your horse adrift and rush in there; and you will find in the lowest dungeon of the tower a safe place of concealment."

She waited for no more, though she saw on the man's face a look of puzzled astonishment.

Away she dashed, and, on reaching the low wall surrounding the tower, leaped from her horse, turned him adrift, and made her way over the ruined wall.

Boldly she entered the tower, and sought the dungeon.

Little imagining the sights and adventures she would meet with there.

#### CHAPTER XXXIV.

##### THE FLIGHT FROM NOTTINGHAM.

WHEN Edgar Atheling was thrown upon his horse by his faithful henchman, Ronald McAlpine, he took one last lingering look at the battle-field.

He saw that his army was in full retreat.

"There is no hope," he exclaimed; "all is indeed lost for the present, but I must give orders to them where to stop."

Following up this idea, he spurred his steed, and quickly caught up his retreating men.

Reining in his steed by the side of his second in command, he said—

"Give orders for the men to halt at the village

some three miles hence. I will then issue my further commands. We may yet retrieve our dire misfortune."

The order was given, and the army halted at the place appointed.

When Edgar's tent was pitched he sent out for his lieutenant, and they had together a long conversation.

Being once more alone he sent for Ronald McAlpine.

"Ronald," he said, "once more we must depart on a mission secret to all but ourselves. My wife must be followed and brought back to safety. Would that I had never left her."

"You have but to command and be obeyed, my lord," said Ronald.

"Saddle two horses," continued Edgar, "and take food sufficient for a two days' journey, in case we should require it."

"It shall be done, my lord," said Ronald, and he left the tent.

During his absence Edgar sat down at a table, and wrote two long communications.

One of these contained orders to be obeyed while he was away, and the other was a sealed paper not to be opened till one week had elapsed.

He had hardly concluded when Ronald entered the tent, saying—

"Lord, the horses are saddled, and all is prepared for our departure."

"Good," replied Edgar; "assist me to put on my armour, and we will start."

He had removed his helmet, corslet, and greaves in order to rest after his fatigue in the late battle.

Ronald did as he was desired, and they left the tent together.

They soon mounted their steeds and started.

They rode in the direction of the cottage where Zeila had been left before the fatal battle. Some distance was traversed and time passed before a word was spoken.

Edgar was busy with his thoughts.

Ronald was too good a servant to interrupt his master's cogitations.

At length Edgar spoke.

"Ronald," he said, "Heaven grant no harm has happened to my wife, and that we may find her safe and happy at the cottage."

"Why should we not, my lord?" replied Ronald. "What could we fear has occurred?"

"I know not," said Edgar, thoughtfully; "yet

I have a strange presentiment, a foreboding that all is not as we could wish it."

He then relapsed into silence, and the remainder of the journey was finished without another word being spoken.

Once arrived there, Edgar threw himself from his horse, and, opening the door, walked in.

Ronald remained outside in charge of the steeds.

When Edgar got into the cottage he was surprised to find only one occupant, and that the woman of the house.

"Where is my wife?" he cried, as he cast his eyes around.

The woman hesitated ere she answered.

"Tell me quickly," impatiently cried Edgar, "or dread my vengeance."

The woman flushed.

Then, hesitatingly, she replied—

"She is not here, my lord. She has fled."

"Fled! and why?" he cried.

"My lord, I know not. Alas! I cannot tell."

"When did she leave?" he asked.

"Last night, my lord, she left," replied the evil-eyed hostess, "which way I know not; but my husband, hearing the clattering of a horse's hoofs, arose and followed out the track. He has not yet returned."

"By heaven, I fear there is some treachery here," cried Edgar. "You have been faithless to your trust. If I find it so I will wreak on the devoted heads of your husband and yourself so dire a vengeance that shall affright even heaven itself."

The woman burst into hypocritical tears as Edgar opened the door, mounted his horse, and, bidding Ronald follow him, rode away in haste.

He had not proceeded far ere he told his henchman what had occurred.

"Where—which way shall we turn?" asked Edgar, "to search for her."

"We must trust to luck, my lord," replied the servant. "Our fortune has stood us in good stead before, and so it will again."

They rode now hastily in the direction of the old Abbey of Farnleigh.

Their good fortune had not deserted them, and they were on the right road, although they knew it not.

They had not proceeded far before they met a man advancing towards them.

It was Hugh Marsden!

(To be continued.)



# POOR JACK, THE LONDON STREET BOY.

## PART II.

### CHAPTER VI.

#### THE CURSE OF ANOTHER'S CRIME FOLLOWS POOR JACK.

IN the excitement of the danger Jack had not noticed the old gentleman, but now, when he

"He is the manager of the bank I was turned out of," Jack replied. I don't think he knew me in these rags; I hope not."

When the old gentleman had departed Jack and Sam went to work again, being short of money.

Jack did not relax his vigilance for one moment, and it was lucky for a tottering old woman, who was in imminent danger of being crushed between the wheels of an omnibus and a huge van, that he did not.

To avoid being knocked down by a hansom

moment, while the drivers were shouting at one another to pull this way or that way, and thereby causing greater confusion.

"Stop, both of you," Jack cried, throwing up his arms excitedly before the horses of the omnibus and van.

Thus Jack saved the life of the poor woman. She was wedged in between the side wheels of the two vehicles, and had the drivers not reined in their horses the instant they did, she must have been crushed out of all human shape.



THE KNIFE WAS RAISED TO STRIKE, WHEN NOBBY KAY RECEIVED A BLOW THAT NEARLY STUNNED HIM.

looked at him, the boy turned a deadly white, and was strangely agitated.

"Never mind now, sir," he said, hurriedly. "I am always to be found here. You may be hurt, and ought to get home. I will fetch you a cab."

He disappeared on the instant. Sam followed him, wondering at the sudden change in him, and why he should object to be rewarded for his noble conduct.

"What's the matter, Jack? You seemed frightened of the old gent," he said.

cab horse she sought safety, as she thought, at the side of an omnibus; a van, turning out of a side street sharply, drew close to the side of the 'bus to avoid a collision with a carriage and pair, and blocked the old woman in between the four wheels of the two vehicles.

Jack saw her peril, and sprang forward to rescue her, at the danger of his own life.

In a crowded thoroughfare, where vehicles are dashing in every direction, it is hazardous in ordinary times to cross the road; the danger was increased tenfold by the excitement of the

The traffic was stopped by the mob that collected upon the scene.

Everybody crowded forward, anxious to know what had happened; but first among them was Sam, ready to help his courageous young friend.

The instant Jack got the drivers to pull up, he squeezed himself between the horses, and, clambering over the four wheels, got at the old woman.

She was more frightened than hurt, fortunately; though fixed between the wheels, there



was no great danger so long as the vehicles did not move.

"Strike me if he aint got into another blooming job o' saving life," Sam muttered, watching his friend with pride. "I never see such a plucky chap in all my life."

"Keep the horses quiet," shouted Jack.

Then he spoke encouragingly to the terrified woman, and instructed her how to get out of her fix.

"Can't I help yer, Jack?" Sam inquired, eagerly.

"Help the lady out as she crawls under the van," Jack replied.

The lady was too frightened to move.

By persuasion and assistance Jack got her down on her hands and knees, and dragged her almost out of her dangerous position.

Sam helped her up, and a cheer went up from the crowd when Poor Jack made his appearance.

Now the danger was over, the poor woman gave way to her pent-up agony in a prolonged scream, and would have fallen but that Jack caught her.

"It's just like the wimmin," remarked an unwashed bystander; "they alwis faint or go into 'sterricks to get up a bit o' hexcitement."

"She may be hurt," someone, with a more feeling heart, suggested.

"Send for a doctor," cried an excited female.

"Better put her in a cab and take her to an hospital," suggested a decently-dressed man. "I will pay for it; I see she is very poor."

"I don't think there is anything the matter with her," said Poor Jack, who had to support her whole weight. "It is more fright than hurt. Perhaps a little brandy will bring her round."

"A bucket o' water chucked over her would do her more good," grunted the man, who had spoken rather disparagingly of women before.

He was called a brute, an unfeeling wretch, and other cheerful names, which persuaded him to make room for some one else.

"Here's the brandy," said Sam, coming up with the spirit in a small flat bottle.

Jack poured a little between the woman's lips, and she almost instantly began to recover from her swoon.

The man who had proposed that the woman should be taken to an hospital put his hand on Sam's shoulder.

"Who gave you the money for that brandy?" he asked.

"Nobody," replied Sam. "I bought it out of what I earned by polishing boots; nobody else wouldn't pay for it."

"You are a good boy," said the man, kindly, and he put a couple of shillings into Sam's hand.

"Thankee, sir, may yer live long and die 'appy."

The stranger smiled, patted Sam on the head, and walked away, seeing that the old woman had recovered.

"I am very sorry I am not rich enough to reward you for your bravery," said the old woman, gratefully.

"I don't want rewarding," said Jack. "You were in danger, and it was my duty to save you if I could; fortunately I did, and I am very glad of it."

Jack was quite a hero; that was the second life he had saved. This news soon got spread by those who witnessed his first courageous deed, and he became the centre of observation and interest.

An elegantly dressed lady, who was accompanied by a fair, lovely little girl, saw Jack save the old woman from being crushed, and she appeared to take more interest in him than any one else.

The old woman blessed him and toddled off. As Jack turned to get out of the gazing crowd, the lady, with the little girl, accosted him.

"I wish to speak to you," she said.

Sam stood respectfully aside, admiring the little girl, and Jack, cap in hand, wondered what the lady wanted of him.

"If I am not mistaken you saved my child from being crushed under a horse's feet, about six months ago, in the same brave manner you

saved that poor woman but just now," she said.

"I do remember saving a young lady about that time," Jack answered, modestly.

"I am very pleased to have met you now," she said. "At the time of the accident I was too excited to think of anything but my child, and went away without rewarding you."

"I do not want a reward," Jack said, and he blushed as his eyes met those of the little lady; "I was only too glad of being able to be of service to you."

"May, my darling, you must thank this brave boy for having saved your life," said the lady.

May, a child about twelve years of age, gave Jack a sweet, grateful smile, and held out her tiny, delicate hand.

"Oh! I am so glad to see you," she exclaimed.

"I have often wanted to thank you for saving my life, and now I don't know what to say. But I am very, very grateful; and mamma will give you a present from me. Will you not, mamma?"

"Certainly, my pet."

The lady took a handsome purse from her pocket, and opened it. It was filled with bright golden sovereigns; and Sam's eyes glistened in anticipation of the reward he expected Jack would receive.

"What is your name, my lad?" the lady asked. "You seem bright and intelligent, and superior to boys of your class, and I may be able to get you a situation."

"Thank you, madame," Jack replied. "I am known as Poor Jack, but my name is John Blake, I believe."

The lady started, and the gentle softness of her face vanished.

"Were you not a clerk at Golding's bank?" she asked.

Jack started now. The question, coming from a stranger and a lady, considerably surprised him.

"I was; and dismissed for another's misdeeds."

The lady became dignified and rigid on the instant. She looked hurt and annoyed with herself, returned the purse to her pocket, and, taking the hand of the child, cast a look of scorn upon Poor Jack.

"Come away, my pet," she said, almost dragging the child with her.

"But, mamma," pleaded the little girl, looking after Jack, "you have not made him a present, and I want to wish him good-bye."

"He is a bad, a wicked boy," said the lady, coldly.

"No, no, mamma, he can't be bad," cried May, impetuously. "He is brave and kind: he saved my life, and he saved a poor woman. Uncle Bentley said if he ever saw him, he would take him out of the streets and do something for him."

"Your uncle Bentley did take him out of the streets, and put him in the bank," said the lady, "but the ungrateful rascal robbed him."

Little May looked sorry when she heard this, and cast a regretful glance at Jack, for whom, in her childish gratitude, she had taken a great liking.

Tears gushed to the poor boy's eyes. He heard all the lady said, and the cruel words pained him the more for being unjust. The affair of the bank seemed to haunt him like a curse, and made him very wretched.

"What's the matter, ole son?" said Sam, putting his arm affectionately round his companion's neck. "Why, didn't the lady give you something? She took her purse out of her pocket to."

"But when she asked my name and I told her who I was, she turned from me as if I was a poison, and told the little girl that I was a thief!" said Jack, bitterly. "They are friends of Colonel Bentley who got me in the bank. I suppose the lady was told of the robbery, and believes me guilty."

"Oh, never mind about them, Jack," said Sam, soothingly. "We can do without their blooming money."

"But I can't do without an honest name, Sam," said Jack, sorrowfully. "It don't seem that I shall ever get clear of that charge."

Wherever I go, or whatever I do, the disgrace follows me."

"If ever I come across that cove, Jackson, I'll smash him if he don't confess he was the thief," said Sam.

"He will be punished some day."

"He will so if I cop 'im, no horror," cried Sam, firmly. "I'm going to turn hup work for ter day. Let's go on the spree."

"I think I shall go home."

Jack was very downcast at what had taken place, and it did not seem to Sam that he could cheer him up.

## CHAPTER VII.

### JACK CAPTURES A THIEF—A DESPERATE STRUGGLE—SAM TO THE RESCUE.

THEY were strolling along, Jack with his birch-broom under his arm and Sam with his blacking-box on his back, when a cry of "Stop thief!" electrified them. They turned and saw a couple of boys about their own age bearing towards them at full speed, followed by a yelling crowd.

"Strike me if it aint Nobby Kay and Stoney," cried Sam; "let's nail 'em."

"We will," assented Jack, aroused from his sad mood.

Nobby Kay and Stoney were notorious thieves, pickpockets; hardened, desperate young ruffians, who feared neither God nor man, and were as familiar with the prison as they were with the streets of London.

When they caught sight of our young friends awaiting to catch them they separated. Nobby Kay dashed up a side court and Jack followed him, leaving Sam to pursue Stoney, who tried to elude him by dodging in and out the vehicles.

Jack put on a spurt and overtook Nobby Kay just as he reached the other end of the court. He brought him up abruptly by pulling him back by the collar.

"What're doin'?" exclaimed the young ruffian, and he glared at Jack with savage ferocity.

"Stopping a thief," Jack returned, quietly.

"Let go, can't yer," and Nobby Kay made use of a word we should blush to repeat. "What d'ye want to interfere for? Let go or I'll break yer dashed jaw."

He used a stronger word than "dashed" and made a violent effort to break loose, but Jack held him firmly and smiled grimly at his efforts.

Nobby Kay was a broader built boy than our hero and possessed of more brute strength, but Jack was the most active and lissom of limb.

"It is no use trying to get away," said Jack; "I owe you a grudge, and shall be able to take it out of you now."

The young thief swore shockingly, and struggled like a madman, but, finding it of no avail, he struck Jack a violent blow in the chest.

Jack returned it with interest under the chin, with such force that made Nobby Kay think he had got locked jaw.

Then they closed, and, after swaying about a short time, fell with a thud wonderfully mixed up; in fact it would have been difficult to discover who the arms and legs belonged to.

Jack did not release his grip, and in the struggle managed to get his opponent beneath him. To keep him down Jack knelt on his chest, and held him with both hands by the collar in such a way that if he attempted to move he got his captor's knuckles jammed in his throat.

The pursuers were near at hand, as was evident by the increase of their cries. Jack was waiting for them to hand over his prisoner, when someone, coming from the opposite direction of the court, gave him a kick under the ear that sent him sprawling.

Before he could recover himself he was set upon by Nobby Kay and Stoney. It was Stoney who had kicked him.

"Murder the beggar," cried Stoney, savagely, doing his best to kick Jack's ribs in, while Nobby Kay was banging the back of his head on the stones.

The kick under the ear had rendered Poor Jack rather bewildered, and, being taken unawares by the pair of young savages, he was helpless in their clutches.

"Here, Nobby, take my knife an' settle him," said Stoney, handing the other a big pocket-



knife with a blade four inches long. "Stick it into his liver. Look sharp, we shall have the crowd on us in a minute."

Nobby Kay took the knife, and held it before Jack's eyes with a look of devilish triumph.

"You can say yer prayers in the other world, cuss yer," he hissed in a tone of murderous hate. To Jack it seemed that nothing could save him.

Though there were hundreds of people within hearing he could be murdered and his assassins escape before anyone could reach him.

The knife was raised to strike, when Nobby Kay received a blow that nearly stunned him.

"Hold him, Jack, while I collar the other."

It was Sam who spoke. He had arrived just in time to save the life of his companion. Coming up unperceived by the murderous young ruffians, he swung his blacking-box round by the strap, and dealt Nobby Kay the blow that nearly stunned him, and caused him to drop the knife as he fell forward on his face over Poor Jack.

The instant Sam saw that the tables were turned against them he took to his heels, leaving his mate to look after himself.

It was then that Sam warned Jack to hold Nobby Kay, and went after the other young ruffian like a grim avenger.

Jack was too much exhausted by the brutal treatment he had received to make much of a struggle, but he tried his best, and fastened on again to Kay.

Desperation lent Nobby Kay strength, and it was not long before he mastered Jack. He dared not lose a moment, if he wished to escape. The crowd was pouring into the court, or he would have murdered Poor Jack.

His heart was good for it, but time pressed him.

Jack looked round for his faithful chum, and just caught sight of the blacking-box as it crashed down on Stoney's head with a force that felled him to the earth all of a heap.

"Bravo, Sam; you brought him down like an ox," said Jack.

"Where's the other?" asked Sam, looking round with disappointment; "have you let him go?"

"I couldn't help it," said Jack; "they nearly slaughtered me, and I had not got strength enough left to hold him."

"I'll take good care this one don't go."

"Let us run him in. Now then, get up," Jack added, in imitation of a policeman, and seized Stoney by the collar; "I don't want any nonsense. Come quietly, or it will be the worse for you."

He dragged the young thief to his feet and gave him a shake.

Stoney was not sure that he was not in the hands of a dreaded policeman, so well did Jack act his part. The blow from the blacking box left him considerably confused.

The howling pursuers now began to arrive upon the scene fast and thick, and soon a dense crowd surrounded the three boys.

"Where is he?" blurted an old gentleman, coming to the fore, puffing like a steam engine and red hot with running. "Who's got the young ruffian? Let me get hands on him."

"There he is," said Jack.

"That's him; hold him tight. You hardened young criminal, confound you," exclaimed the old gent, grasping Stoney by the shoulder, "what do you mean by stealing my watch and breaking my chain?"

He flourished the end of a gold guard that dangled from a buttonhole of his waistcoat, and looked vengeance at the young thief.

"Who're getting at?" said Stoney, with insolent defiance. "You'd better mind what you're at, quoin me o' thievin'."

"You audacious young scamp!" exclaimed the old gent; "I saw you take it and run."

"You're a liar," cried Stoney; "I aint seen no watch. Search me if yer like; I'll make yer pay for calling me a thief."

"You daring young scoundrel."

"This is the thief, right enough," said Jack; "my mate stopped him."

"That's me," said Sam, presenting himself with an air of importance. "I thought I'd

cracked his skull, but I suppose it is too thick to break."

Stoney favoured him with a venomous glance.

"Now, Stoney, you had better give the watch up, if you have it," said Poor Jack. "You are only making things worse for yourself."

"I aint got the watch," roared the young thief, with a desperate oath. "You let me alone. It aint nothink ter do with you, an' you'll suffer for this, so I tell yer."

He made a sudden wrench to break loose, but Jack's grip was too secure.

"Not this time," said our hero. "Here comes someone who knows you."

The someone was Grant, the detective—a powerfully-built, gentlemanly fellow, about six and twenty years of age—and a boy about the age of Sam.

"Ah, my boy," said Grant, "so you have captured the thief."

"Sam did," said Jack; "and he saved my life, too."

"Bravo, Sam!" said the boy with Grant, who was our old friend, Captain Joe. "You're getting quite a professional thief-catcher."

"Do you charge this young rascal?" Grant asked of the old gentleman.

"Charge him!" blurted the old chap; "of course I charge him. Wouldn't anyone charge him if he stole a watch worth forty guineas from them?"

Grant beckoned a constable, and handed Stoney over to him.

"Take this boy in custody for robbery," he said. "The gentleman will go with you to the station, and make the charge."

Stoney was marched off in the hands of a constable, accompanied by the old gentleman.

The crowd then dispersed, there being nothing more to see.

"I'm sorry to see you have had to come back to this game again."

"It is not my fault, Mr. Grant," and then Jack told him all about the affair at the bank.

"I know the particulars, my boy," said the detective, "being engaged to find out the thief; and I don't think it will be long before I bring it home to the right party."

"Jackson is the thief, as sure as I am living," said Jack.

"That's whom I suspect," Grant smiled; "but he does not suspect the cigar-light boy is watching his movements."

"Is the cigar-light boy Joe?" Jack questioned.

"That's me. I'm a innocent kid, aint I, when I'm asking a chap to buy a box o' lights?" Joe remarked, knowingly.

"About as innocent as they make 'em," observed Sam.

"Are you good for a game to-night, Joe?" Jack asked.

"I can't. Mr. Grant's got a case in hand, and he wants me."

They parted then, leaving Jack and Sam together.

"Joe's a blooming knowing 'un, an' no horror," said Sam.

"He will make a sharp detective if he sticks to it."

"He will that. What shall we do with ourselves, Jack? Go to the theater arter we've had a feed?"

"I don't mind; but let us go to the Serpentine in the park, and have a dip to take a little dirt off our bodies."

"Right you are, Jack. I'm just in the humour for a swim; but, fust of all, we'll have something to eat."

Jack agreed to this, and they adjourned to a coffee-shop to feed accordingly.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

AT THE SERPENTINE—A SPREE IN THE WATER—THE YAFFLER THINKS AN EXCHANGE IS NO ROBBERY, AND MAKES A SUITABLE CHANGE.

The sun was setting in a glory of purple light when Poor Jack and his chum, Sam, entered Hyde Park.

"Aint it lovely?" exclaimed Sam, in admiration.

"Beautiful," Jack rejoined, gazing upon the scene.

It was beautiful. The autumn-tinted foliage

shone with a variety of shades in the subdued glare of the declining sun, and the clear waters of the Serpentine rippled invitingly with a golden sheen cast upon it.

A stillness reigned that tranquillises the soul, and inspires one with gentle thoughts.

"If this aint prime, tell me," observed Sam, in a quiet tone.

"Doesn't such a time as this make you feel better?" said Jack.

"It does an' no mistake; I feel as if I could forgive my greatest enemy now, and could pray to always feel as good as I do now."

Sam spoke earnestly, and his face grew gentle in expression.

There was more good in these two poor, ragged outcasts than in many of the aristocracy who were rolling round the Lady's Mile in elegant equipages, attended by servile lacqueys in silk and plush—more virtue and sterling humanity, uncultivated as they were, than the favoured of court and fashion could boast.

"How would yer like to be one o' them chaps purched hup behind a carriage?" Sam asked.

"Not much. They are fed well, but I don't like their clothes."

"Too much like Guy Fawks, aint they? Besides, it aint nice ter have to flour yer head, is it, an' go about with only thin stockings on? I should like to stick a pin in one o' them chaps' calves. Lor! wouldn't he holler?"

"Never mind about these fellows. Let us go and have a dip in the water before it is too late," Jack urged.

"But it would be a lark to stick a pin in one o' their legs. I've got a fine 'un, about two inches long."

He plucked a blanket pin from the lining of his jacket, and held it up for Jack's inspection.

"Don't go playing off these larks, Sam," said Jack. "You will only get yourself into trouble if you do."

(To be continued.)

## PAUL JONES; OR, THE ROVER'S LOVE.

### BOOK THE SECOND.

#### CHAPTER XVII.

##### BETRAYED.

THE woman shuddered at the stern manner and harsh words of the handsome boy, as he stood, like a prince, pointing to the guilty traitor.

In his youthful ardour and love for his gallant chief, English Spray considered no death too bad for the villainous Lorenzo.

"He should be hung," said our young hero, "if I had my will;" and, glancing upward at the roof of the cave, he uttered a cry of astonishment.

Here was a ring fixed in the roof, and attached to it a rope and pulley, the ends of the rope being fastened to another ring in the wall of the cave.

English Spray called the attention of Paul Jones to this, and urged the necessity of acting with promptitude.

"Shall I settle accounts with him?" asked our young hero.

Paul Jones paused, and glanced his eyes from one face to another in doubt.

With pain English Spray noted the signs of indecision in his looks.

At length, to the relief of all, Paul spoke.

"I will spare the miserable hound," he began, when a small sealed packet fell from the loose robe of Lorenzo, and stopped his speech.

The pirate picked up the packet, and desired English Spray to open it, which he did, and handed it back to his chief, who read:—

"Having heard that you have conquered the formidable pirate, Paul Jones, by the aid of the information I forwarded to you, I desire that my reward may be safely packed and handed to an escort of my men, who will bear it safely to me; for fear this should fall into wrong hands, I have omitted name and so forth."

Paul staggered when he read it.

Here was twofold villainy!

Who could this letter be intended for?

The writer placed such faith in his success,



that he had the audacity to consider his foul work complete.

Paul questioned Lorenzo, but he remained stolid and stubborn, not deigning so much as to speak even, until Paul made a sign to English Spray, and he, with not unnecessary violence, pushed aside the women, and brought both ends of the rope into the centre of the cave.

Strange to say, the rope plucked the stone on which Lorenzo was seated. English Spray made a noose with a slip knot, which he quickly adjusted round the neck of the traitor, who was now pale and trembling, and pleading piteously for mercy.

English Spray placed the end of the rope in the hands of the sturdy Goldup.

Then he called to Andre, who, on entering, reported a party on foot making their way up the winding ridge that led to the gorge, and he bade him clap on to the rope also.

"Have you any confession to make?" then asked English Spray; "or do you think either of these females respect you enough to pray for your sordid soul?"

The guilt-stricken wretch quivered with fear when he found our hero was in earnest. King Death, with his terrors, was nearer to him than he had expected.

But English Spray was determined to show him no mercy.

"Run him up," at length spoke Paul Jones, in a voice such as had often rang on the quarter-deck.

Then English Spray rove the end of the rope through the ring, and, with a hearty will, the traitor was run up to the block with such force that his quietus took place immediately.

Fastening the rope to the ring, English Spray then turned to his chief.

"Paul Jones," he said, "have you any further commands to issue, or may I act on my own responsibility?"

"We must first see who this party is advancing. Those men," pointing to Andrea and Goldup, "have promised to stand by me. Let them be well armed, in case there is a fresh movement of treachery on foot."

Paul Jones then left the cave and ascended a steep rock, the summit of which was crowned with a thick bush, which served both for an ambuscade and a look-out.

From this point he could view the party ascending the winding ridge; and to his astonishment he recognised in them several of his own boat's crew.

"The fighting 'Falcon,'" he echoed. "Bravo! We can make our victory here now secure."

Stepping out from shelter of the tree, he exposed his form to view, and waved his unwounded arm.

Then arose a shout, and the pirates, putting on steam, ran like deers along the ridge, which was not only narrow but dangerous.

"Welcome, welcome," said English Spray, shaking the hand of Sam Scud, who was one of the party. "It is an ill wind that blows nobody good. See you here we have fallen into a cave of plunder?"

"Thank goodness you have not fallen into a snare," replied Sam. "We began to be alarmed at your long absence, and so came to look after you. All is well, I suppose."

English Spray pointed aloft, and then told the story.

Sam Scud listened intently, and then he gave vent to a dozen or so ungentlemanly expletives.

"Dead though he is, I should like to put a bullet or two into the carrion's carcase," he said angrily.

But there was no time for a waste of words.

When the dastardly Lorenzo was about to be sent aloft the women fled in terror, shrieking, into the interior of the cave; they feared that the pirate in his anger might wreak his vengeance upon them.

But Paul Jones and his trusty companion kept their wrath and their dangerous steel for more worthy foemen.

When the reinforcement arrived he ordered the cave to be searched, and he was about to issue the command that the four prisoners were to be loaded with the spoil they might find, when the sound of a gun disturbed them, echoing

through the cave with a resonance imitating that caused by the sharp crack of a peal of thunder.

"Good Heavens!" cried the pirate captain, paling slightly. "That is the recall gun of the 'Falcon.' Some mischief is abroad."

English Spray gazed on the startled visage of the chief in perplexity.

"Do you think that the vipers are at work already?" he asked.

"I have a presentiment," answered the pirate chief, hollowly; "I am afraid that the days of the fighting 'Falcon' are numbered."

English Spray startled, and looked at Sam Scud.

There was something so ominous in the words of Paul Jones that the young seamen looked grave—an extraordinary circumstance with them.

As they stood, in a state of trepidation, another distant boom resounded, and startled the occupants of the cave.

"We must be moving," suddenly spoke Paul Jones, a heavy cloud resting on his brow.

Then the cavalcade fell in, and wended their way towards the boat, which had been hauled up and hidden among the rocks.

"The minute gun!" cried Paul Jones, as he marked the interval between each report by his watch. "Quick, lads, we must double up sharp," and they sped over the rough ground with a speed that would have rivalled that of the deer.

On a rising ground, before descending to the beach, Paul paused, letting his men go forward to launch the boat, and then he took a searching survey around.

"Good God!" were the only words he could utter.

Two Italian frigates, under all sail, were bearing down upon the "Falcon," coming from the direction of the Bay of Naples, and with his naked eye the invincible pirate could see that their guns were run out and their decks cleared for action.

Without speaking a word Paul Jones sprang down the jagged path, and leapt from rock to rock, until he reached the boat, which was now launched, and he gave the stern order to pull swiftly on board.

"Aye, aye," was the response.

The oars flashed in the brine, the spray shot up about the bows, and the sharp-prowed galley cleft the blue water like an arrow.

Paul Jones breathed freely once more when he found himself on board his own splendid ship.

With a fervent embrace he kissed Gulnara, and dispelled the fears that had crowded upon her.

"I am here, darling," he said, in fervent tones. "Would that I had known a few short hours ago what I know now."

"Be calm, Paul, be calm," she exclaimed, trembling the meanwhile with the excitement caused by their meeting. "Blewitt tells me we are surrounded with danger, and at my request he fired the signal guns."

"Thanks, loved one. Oh, that I may live to repay you the kindness of your love."

"Paul!"

"Darling!"

"What ails you?"

"I know not; I seem to have lost all vigour. A presentiment—"

"Hush! For heaven's sake let not presentiments haunt you; they will unman you, and give your enemies the victory over you."

English Spray, stepping into the cabin, put an end to their further conversation.

"We shall not have time to weigh anchor," he said; "had we not better slip and run for it? Those confounded Italians are coming down upon us like the wind."

There had been a very light air stirring until now, when a strong breeze began to ruffle the surface of the water.

Paul Jones at once led the way on deck, and ordered the vessel to be put in trim.

With his well-disciplined crew Paul Jones quickly got his vessel under weigh, and, like a sea bird, turned her head to seaward.

The men-of-war, on seeing this, clapped on every sail they could stagger under, resolved at

all risks to capture the redoubtable pirate, if possible.

Paul Jones laughed at their puny efforts, but his laugh was not like the old laugh; it seemed as if a cloud had settled upon him.

Gulnara, the peerless beauty, came on deck.

"Paul," she said, sweetly, "do we gain?"

"A little," was the pirate's reply, "but it is hardly perceptible; if we hold well on till night I may find a means of slipping them in the darkness."

Though the breeze kept freshening, the hours of that day dragged wearily onwards, and when the long-looked-for shades of evening began to deepen they brought with them a fresh cause of alarm.

The masthead-man reported a sail, which, upon examination, proved to be a British seventy-four.

Paul started when he made this discovery, but he spoke not a word, neither did he betray his emotion, even by the working of a muscle; he was perfectly stolid and resolved.

Gulnara even failed to read his thoughts.

She, who so often playfully boasted that she held his life and soul under her sway, was completely foiled.

But we must not misjudge the daring pirate, and fancy him quelled; he was simply check-mated for the time, and totally hemmed in by the three men-of-war.

Of course, as the men-of-war approached each other they exchanged signals, and each one being eager to be the first to claim the pirate as his prize, did the best they could to circumvent him.

"We must fight for it," at length broke out the pirate. "Double-shot the guns, Blewitt, and let them speak."

Then, buckling on his sword, he saw to the priming of his pistols, and then stood, calm and unperturbed, on the quarter deck.

"Boom!"

This was a signal gun from the frigate, but of which our hero took no notice until it was repeated, and then he prepared for the tug of war.

English Spray stood by our hero's side nearly all the time, assisting him to give orders, and endeavouring to assure him with his calmness.

But, alas, for the fighting "Falcon," her days seemed numbered.

A heavy broadside from the seventy-four would have annihilated her had not Paul, by a skilful movement, shifted the helm, and dodged the iron shower, which, however, hit one of the Italian frigates, sinking her almost immediately, causing the other to heave to.

Thus rid for a time of two of his formidable enemies, Paul Jones directed the whole of his attention to the seventy-four.

And he had plenty to do even in this, for the great war ship opened fire upon the "Falcon" in good earnest.

Paul Jones bravely returned the broadside, and pegged away at his gigantic adversary with true pluck; but after a well-maintained fight of a few hours, during which time darkness set in, Blewitt reported the ship to be sinking and on fire in several places.

Paul Jones, grimed with smoke and powder as he was, turned of an ashen hue.

"Good heavens!" he gasped. "Gulnara, it is for you I feel."

The brave girl was standing by his side at that moment.

She had shared in the fight, and as he gazed upon her an explosion occurred that broke the ship nearly in half, and blew away one portion of the deck altogether.

Blewitt was hurled away a couple of fathoms, and as he crept on to a portion of wreck, he looked towards the once fighting "Falcon."

What a sight met his gaze!

On the quarter-deck of the burning ship, amid the flame and smoke, there was a tableau.

Paul Jones, the once-dreaded pirate, was lying wounded on the deck, supported on either side by English Spray and Sam Scud, whilst before the stricken chief knelt his faithful bride, Gulnara!

END OF BOOK SECOND.





CLASPING THE INSENSIBLE FEMALE FORM, HAROLD DESCENDED THE SHIP'S SIDE.

## RAVEN'S NEST; OR, THE CRUISE OF THE "FIREFLY."

### CHAPTER XII.

#### THE BURIAL AT SEA.

THE day selected for the burial of Arthur Courtney was a sad one on board the gallant frigate "Firefly."

A day that, though the action had been crowned with victory, had caused the sadness to fall on all, has been handed down to us in history, and forms a glorious epoch in the blazing scroll of fame.

The boatswain's shrill pipes were muffled on that day.

Even the footfalls of the seamen were hushed in the presence of the dead.

In fact the very air that pervaded the glorious frigate was as solemn and hushed as it could be.

There was scarcely a breath of wind; the sea was comparatively smooth, and the sun shone with a softened mellowness, whilst the zephyr-like breezes that came in catpaws swelled out gently the snowy sails, and caused the ropes to rattle softly.

Let us glance at the deck of the noble frigate.

Stretched upon gratings in two rows, one on either side of the quarter deck, lay the bodies of the slain, thirty-one in all, covered over by as many Union Jacks as the signal chest of the old frigate could provide.

It was easy to guess what was concealed beneath the Union Jack on the after skylight, its size and form, and the blood-stained old flag.

It was the body of our young hero, Arthur Courtney.

Doctor Hardy stood with his hands behind him gazing on the sad spectacle, and a kindly smile on his sun-browned and handsome face.

"Poor boy! he is gone," he ruminated. "And yet if he had lived he would have become

one of our greatest naval heroes. There was the stuff in him, when properly brought out."

Captain Lewis came up from below at that moment.

He was in full uniform, a sign that something more than ordinary was about to take place.

"Doctor Hardy," he said, stepping softly to his side, "I shall be pleased when this mournful task is over."

The bell forward had then commenced to toll, and a tear stole softly into many an eye as its solemn sounds fell on the ear.

Captain Lewis cast a sorrowful glance at the sad relics; in his imagination he pictured the scene of the awful carnage over again.

He saw his brave seamen fall on the slippery, blood-stained deck, and again heard the sickening crash of the hurtling grapeshot, as it swept down the brave fellows at their guns.

But regrets were now useless; the last office had to be performed, and the chaplain was already preparing to read the funeral service for the burial of the dead at sea.

On the previous day he had offered up prayers for those who had gone down with the wreck of the pirate ship, for several had gone down, fighting hand-to-hand with the foe.

Exactly at eight bells all hands were piped on deck, and the gunners who were told off for the bearers assembled on the poop.

Captain Lewis and his officers, with bared heads, then took their places at the gangway, and the mournful service proceeded.

A stifled sob came from the crew when the snowy hammock, covered with the gory flag, was brought on a grating to the port through which the bodies were to pass.

And with bowed heads they listened to the impressive service read by the chaplain, after which the canvas coffin, with two cold shot sewn in it at the foot, was prepared for launching.

At this moment a grey-headed old salt, with a beard of snowy whiteness spreading over his

chest, stepped forward, and fastened upon the breast of the hammock a forget-me-not worked in wool, and a couple of violets.

This little mark of kindness so touched the onlookers that many of them, especially our young middies, wept, and the kind-hearted doctor let a tear fall to the deck.

Then followed the dull splash; the body of little Arthur Courtney was consigned to the deep, and as it sank out of sight a ravenous shark dived down after it, anxious to make it its prey.

Then followed the others in turn, according to their rank, until thirty-one was counted; and ended the funeral at sea.

Captain Lewis piped the hands to grog when it was all over, for the gloom cast upon the crew was becoming oppressive.

Some of the wounded who could be moved had been brought on deck to witness the last of their comrades, and they were instantly taken below again to the sick bay as soon as the burials were finished.

It took all that night and part of the next day for to shake off the terrible gloom that settled upon all, and then the crew began to grow more cheerful.

The fiddle played upon the main deck; horn-pipes were danced, and songs were sung, and the tars were once more the Jolly Jacks they had hitherto been.

It was then that Peter Sharke began to make himself notorious.

As Brawny Dick passed through the steerage on the lower deck, he beheld in the gloom a figure kneeling at one of the midshipmen's chests, and that chest was no other than poor little Arthur Courtney's.

"Sharks and thunder!" thought Brawny Dick. At the same time he had the presence of mind to walk on and conceal himself behind the mast-casing, where he could watch.

Then he saw that the amiable Peter Sharke



held a key with which he opened the chest, and removed from it several valuables, such as a gold watch, a pencil case, and a splendid gold ring that was given to the departed boy by his mother.

"You thief!" muttered Brawny Dick between his clenched teeth; "you worse than thief! I would like to turn you inside out with my own hands."

Presently Peter Sharke rose.

He had possessed himself of all the valuables he could lay his hand upon, and taking a letter, which was in the handwriting of Harold Wynne, he dropped it down beside the chest and locked it again.

"There, they will be blaming him for this robbery," he muttered, satisfactorily. "The watch and chain are at least worth twenty guineas."

With this reflection he crept up the steerage ladder, walked along the main deck, and descended the fore-ladder, then slunk into his mess, chuckling to himself at the clever manner he had gone through his villainous performance; but he had still more villainous designs in his head, which will be developed as our tale proceeds.

As Peter Sharke left the steerage another individual entered it—no other than Hannibal Jupiter Joe, who was bound on a marooning voyage, that is, he was on the forage.

In the hope that he might by some means get possessed of a nip of rum, he sauntered to the gun-room, and hovered about the door.

He was not long in attracting the middies' attention.

And as soon as they saw him they hailed his presence with delight.

"What cheer, Hannibal?" cried one.

"Hallo! Who's been polishing your figure head?" queried another.

"Come in, Jupe," cried a third; and Jupiter accepted the invitation most gladly.

Harold Wynne and Willie were in the gun-room, their companion being another middy, named Scott.

He was known by the nickname of Scotty, and he was a terrible hasty temper when put about.

He was not bad-tempered, however, on ordinary occasions, and he was a dear lover of a lark.

"Well, Jupe, what's the matter with you?" asked Harold Wynne; "you look sad and pale."

"Ah, Massa Wynne, me be sadly put out; berry much upset. Jupe fret much for de loss ob de poor Massa Courtney; so shocking. It was him dat gib me de drop ob medicine before de action, and I neber forget him till I die."

Jupiter began to snivel a bit. He thought that the most direct course to get at what he wanted.

"Give him a wet," said Scotty; "I'll stand Sam. Although Jupe's head is hard and thick, his heart is soft. Come on, old fellow; let us drink to those who are absent."

Scotty was a frank, true-hearted boy.

He was, in fact, of the true stuff that forms the British sailor.

The mention of poor little Arthur of course at first cast a gloom, but that wore off; and Jupiter, having been freshened with a nip, soon forgot his sorrow.

"By golly, dis jolly good stuff. Wish Jupiter had nothin' to do but drink um day and night. How jolly! He, he, he!"

Jupiter Joe was getting quite merry already, and even assumed a boldness which he would not dare to think of on any other occasion.

Having partaken of another freshener, his huge eyes began rolling about in a most comical manner.

"He, he! dat de stuff to get fat on. Hannibal neber get tired of it."

The mischievous mids were all this time winking at one another.

In truth they were hatching some fun, and a thought suddenly suggested itself to them.

The idea was to get Jupiter to dress up as a marine and sing a song.

Harold was not long in finding the necessities.

There was a jacket and shako, belonging to a

marine off duty, hanging up abaft the marines' mess, and this he contrived to get.

Another stiff glass of grog was all that was needed to induce Jupiter to put it on, and it fitted him to a nicety.

"Now for a song."

"Golly, yeth! I sing like one saucepan; what shall um be?"

"Oh, anything. Go on."

Jupiter pulled the shako well down about his ears, and then commenced, in one of the celebrated nigger tunes—

On board ob de "Fighting Firefly."

Hannibale Jupiter Joe.

Him scratch him pate and smack him thigh.

Hannibale Jupiter Joe.

De fastest sailing frigate is she.

Hannibale Jupiter Joe.

And jolliest on board d'ye see

Is Hannibale Jupiter Joe.

"Bravo, bravo!" cried the middies, banging the table; "that's capital, Jupe."

The negro got quite elated with his success, and the flattery sent him almost past himself with joy. Raising his voice another note, he went on—

Dere's a nigger far away on de ole Kentucky shore,

Hannibale de Jupiter de Joe.

It's a lady you must know and her heart him beatem so

For her Hannibale de Jupiter de Joe.

Den bring along de fiddle and let de darkie play,

Hannibale de Jupiter de Joe.

Dere's nothing equals rum, I wish dis darkie he had some,

To give to Hannibale de Jupiter de Joe.

Whilst this was going on, and Jupiter flinging his arms about more wildly as his excitement increased, Harold Wynne slipped out of the gun-room and procured a fire bucket half-full of water, which he hooked up to the beam just behind Jupiter's head.

Scotty, to keep his attention fixed, poured out another nip nearly four fingers up the glass, and when Jupiter swallowed this it seemed as if he could sing and dance for ever.

Flinging his arms about in the most extravagant manner, he commenced singing wildly, slapping his thighs, and going through all the contortionist business peculiar to the negro community.

Suddenly the face of Brawny Dick appeared at the doorway; but, seeing that the gentlemen of the gun-room were engaged, he did not enter.

There was an air of seriousness in Joe's visage when he first appeared, but he changed suddenly; his broad features relaxed, he smiled, and then broke into a broad grin.

Den bress de yellar gal, down by de river side.

Hannibale de Jupiter de Joe;

Oh could she see her lub, all in him manly pride,

Her Hannibale de Jupiter de Joe.

"Whoo! Wauf dat? Oh, gorra mighty!"

Jupiter sang the last line and uttered the very expressive ejaculation all in a breath.

In his exuberance he had taken off his shako, and smacked his thigh, and, throwing his head upwards and backward, struck the bucket with a bump, causing it to recede, of course, and thus emptying the whole of its contents into his neck hole and down his back, between his skin and his white flannel shirt.

This was a go, and no gammon.

The sudden change from the sublime to the ridiculous was perfectly astonishing.

The cold sea-water, coming in contact with the negro's perspiring skin, sent a chill through him as if he had swallowed an icicle.

After sitting for a moment in a state of utter helplessness, his eyes rolled upward until little else than the whites could be seen, he started suddenly to his feet, and uttered a cry similar to that of a savage war-whoop—

"Whoo, wha-a-golly!" he gulped.

The boys were almost afraid to laugh outright; but one unlucky wight, who had been attracted hither by the unearthly noise, did laugh until his narrow sides were ready to split.

This individual was no other than the indispensable Tweezers.

"What for you laugh, you ugly pacaroon?" said Jupiter, fiercely. "You play tricks on Jupiter; by jingo I play game wid you."

So saying, he raised his huge fist to smite the offender, but Tweezer's spider-like legs disappeared like lightning with his little body.

Jupiter darted after him; but Tweezers, with

a cat-like movement, squeezed himself through between the mast-casing and the chain trunks, thus escaping the huge grasp that was about to be fixed upon him.

Jupiter, however, dodged round, and, determined not to be done, followed Tweezers to his sanctuary, a place, above all places in the ship, that Jupiter, when in his right senses, scrupulously avoided.

"Gorra! One dam rascal, me hab you," he jerked out, and into the doctor's cabin he bolted, making another grab at Tweezers, who, with the agility of an eel, eluded him again.

Jupiter was in a perfect rage.

"You one devil's pup!" he gasped, almost breathless. "I'll hab de life ob you for dis; mind dat, sar."

Tweezers' visage was the very picture of despair.

He had glided in between two large nests of drawers, where he was out of reach of Jupiter's long arm, but totally at the mercy of any weapon he might think proper to use.

The weapon chosen was a light dress sword, usually worn by Tweezers when the "Firefly" was in action.

And, seizing this from its beackets at the beam above, the negro flourished it in the most disagreeable manner.

"Golly; dis am de berry ting," said the black, his two dark, piercing eyes sticking out like enormous discs. "I'll hab blood, you monkey—I'll hab blood."

Baring the bright blade, Jupiter, in his half-military suit, looked like a Nemesis, full of vengeance and ready for fight.

He stepped forward with a threatening glance, prepared to skewer the enemy on his weapon, when a black cat suddenly bolted between his legs, sending him flying across the cabin, when a sudden roll of the frigate caused him to balance himself for a moment on his naked left big toe, and then flop down on—no, into a brass-bound chest, the lid of which, unfortunately for our ebony hero and those more nearly concerned, was open.

If Jupiter flopped down suddenly, he sprang to his feet more quickly, and gave a roar such as one may imagine was uttered by the proverbial town bull; a roar that caused the very timbers of the stout old frigate to tremble, and made her heave and dip her bows, metaphorically speaking, into the belching sea.

Jupiter sprang up, as we have said, and went through the preparatory motion of taking a run, when he was brought up all standing with a jerk.

It was Tweezer's turn to howl now.

He looked perfectly ghastly; the little blood in his wire-like body seem to have taken French leave.

"Good God, I am ruined!" he gasped; "you black son of Judas, you—you have blighted me for ever."

Jupiter, in the meantime, could do nothing but howl. He could not move, and why?

Simply this, dear readers. He was anchored by the stern to the chest by the long, skeleton neck of a crocodile, the jaws of which had closed upon that part of Jumbo's anatomy upon which at times he was compelled to sit.

Yes; the wire springs had acted, and the two rows of saw-like teeth had fixed themselves in Jupiter's tender flesh.

"Oh, release me!" was now the only song he could sing, and that to one of the most discordant tunes imaginable.

To be plain, Doctor Hardy was an admirer of anatomical curiosities, and this peculiar specimen which Jupiter had disturbed in its solitude was a skeleton Doctor Hardy had found buried in the sands of the Nile, not far from the very spot where Nelson soon afterwards fought his great battle.

At that very moment when the water found its way down Jupiter's back Tweezers was busied in stowing the skeleton form away for the night, Doctor Hardy having been employed in improving upon its mechanism, and, on hearing Jupiter's unearthly yell, Tweezers rushed out, forgetting to close the lid and lock it.

His precipitate return of course precluded all



possibility of his closing it again, and this, as we know, was the means of saving, perhaps, Tweezers' life, and the cause of Jupiter's captivity.

Now, it happened at this particular moment, that Burly Joe, the big marine, whose clothing Jupiter was wearing, had missed his clothes, and was searching for them in the most unenviable of humours, fearing they might have fallen into the scran bag, a receptacle for all things lost and found on board a man-of-war, which bag is emptied once a month, and if the property is not claimed and a certain fine paid, the article is sold by auction on board to any of the ship's company who may choose to purchase it.

By this means no clothing but that in actual use is left about the mess, and the decks kept clear of lumber.

No wonder, then, that Burly Joe was out of humour, especially as it was his turn on deck at eight bells; and we must not be surprised that, when he peered in at the open doorway of the doctor's sanctum, and saw Jupiter in his novel position with the missing coat on, which, we may add, was drenched, he uttered a strong expletive.

"Shiver my musket stock," he exclaimed, almost breathless with astonishment. Then, seizing a broom from the hands of a boy who was sweeping the lower deck, he commenced soundly belabouring the black.

The frantic struggles made by Jupiter to free himself naturally caused the teeth of the anatomy to close the tighter, and the extra pain, caused by the broom-handle laid on his back and shoulders with an unsparing and brawny hand, made Jupiter yell a thousand murders.

"What's the meaning of all this?" spoke the gruff voice of the master-at-arms, who suddenly appeared upon the scene. "What are you doing of, Joe?"

"Dusting my coat," replied the marine, pausing for breath. "This black son of an African sea cook has placed it on his back for that purpose."

"I cannot have this unruly work here," said the master-at-arms. "As sure as my name's Tailtickle I will stop it."

In the meantime, Tweezers had crept from his place of refuge, and, touching a spring, caused the thing to relax its hold, and return to its receptacle, where Tweezers, with a trembling hand, arranged it comfortably, and then locked it up.

The mischief-loving mids, from the shadow of a bulkhead, watched the cheerful proceedings, and they enjoyed the fun as boys never enjoyed fun before.

They shrank back deeper into the shade when Jupiter, having divested himself of Burly Joe's coat, passed them on his way to the mess, uttering threats of vengeance.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### THE SHIP ON FIRE.

IT was a bright noonlight night—the gallant frigate bowled along merrily. A gun brig in the morning had boarded them, and delivered to Captain Lewis's care a sealed dispatch, which was not to be opened only in a certain latitude and longitude described thereon.

She was now proceeding under all plain sail for that destination, and the hearts of all on board, with a few exceptions, were as light and cheerful as the wind that whistled through the upper cordage of the "Firefly."

"She sails well; we never were in better trim," said the captain to his first lieutenant, Mr. Mason, who had charge of the deck; "by this time to-morrow night, if this wind holds, we shall be able to open our sealed orders. I for one feel very inquisitive about them, especially as Nelson has once more hoisted his flag."

"I feel quite as anxious about them as yourself, Captain Lewis. I hope that if we have a rub with the French, that our orders will secure us a warm billet. It is time we had another opportunity of showing the mettle of the lads on board of the 'Fighting Firefly.'"

"We shall have all that, I do not doubt. By this time our dispatches should have reached

the Admiralty, unless some of those stupid Jacks in office have made a bungle of it."

"Ha! ha! Well, we shall see. Mr. Wynne," turning to a middy who stood near him; "step up into the main-top, and take a survey around."

"Aye, aye, sir," answered the mid, touching his cap.

In another minute he was aloft and scanning the horizon with his spy-glass.

"Sail ho!" he cried.

"Where away?"

"Two points on the lee beam, nearly under the moon."

Since the captain and the first-lieutenant first spoke a huge bank of clouds had risen up and partly obscured the moon, rendering the vessel Harold Wynne had just sighted almost indistinct.

Harold's quick eye, however, singled it out, and after a time he was enabled to see that she was a large vessel, heavily armed.

This was by no means strange in those days. It was a common occurrence for merchantmen to be heavily armed, especially one vessel which was to act as a convoy in the absence of a man-of-war.

Therefore, when he reported it to the first luff, Mr. Mason merely snapped to his glass, and commenced walking unconcernedly to and fro.

As the half-hours passed, and the ship's bell struck, the cheerful "All's well" sounded from the different posts, and the log was hove according to custom.

Being war time, the rules on board his Britannic Majesty's ships were very stringent.

Flogging was then in full vogue, and a man to be "flaked," as it is nautically termed, was as common as breakfast time of a morning.

Captain Lewis, however, as true-hearted a seaman as ever stepped, as our story will disclose, detested the cat; and when there was any chance of substituting for that punishment any other he would do so.

Harold Wynne and little Willie, who were both in the same watch, were leaning over the bulwarks near the look-out on the starboard bow, they being at that time on the port tack, running a point or so free.

Both middies were anxiously watching the spot where Harold had seen the strange ship.

The sky was still cloudy, but they made out the vessel's sails and hull, about a mile distant.

Suddenly a bright flash darted up from her deck, supplemented with an immense glow, which shone through the haze that was now settling on the bosom of the deep.

"A ship on fire!" echoed simultaneously from the throats of all who witnessed it.

"A ship on fire!"

The cry spread like lightning through the frigate.

"Hands make sail!" was the order that rang out.

Then the royals, that had been stowed for the night, were loosed, and the fore topmast standing sail was hoisted.

In the meantime the fire on board the ship was spreading rapidly.

Streaks of red and yellow flames shot from the open ports, up the hatchways, and licked hungrily the dry tarred rigging.

Captain Lewis, who had only just gone below when the alarm was raised, was on the poop in a second.

"Clear away all boats ready for lowering," he shouted, in clear and unexcitable tones.

Then, directing the helmsman, he stood watching the burning ship, upon which the noble frigate was now bearing down, like an albatross before the wind.

Those on board the ill-fated ship had seen the frigate coming to the rescue, and the captain, before making any effort for the safety of life, had used all his energy to stop the raging element.

But he might just as well have tried to check the mountain torrent—the flames had taken such firm hold before the calamity was discovered; but the captain for all that did his best, and actually lost his life in his brave but vain endeavour,

having fallen down the main hatchway into the midst of the burning mass.

When the frigate bore down and was hove to Harold's boat, the port cutter, was the first to kiss the water, and the daring boy, swinging himself into her, gave the word to shove off and give way.

As the cutter's bow touched the quarter of the burning ship Harold seized a rope and climbed on board of her like a cat.

Then he dived into the cabin, whence the heartrending shrieks of a distressed female proceeded.

Through the blinding smoke he made his way into the after cabin, guided by the half-stifled means that issued therefrom.

It was a perilous moment.

The deck under his feet was so hot that the leather of his boots was scorched, and withered on his feet.

Yet he quailed not.

Fighting his way through the smoke and flame that threatened to choke out his young life, he made his way to the berth which was now silent, only for the hissing and seething of the ravenous flames, and, feeling the form of a female, he raised it in his youthful arms, and groped his way back to the cabin stairway and on deck.

There he found a rope ladder thrown by someone over the side, and then he took a long deep breath to expel the smoke from his lungs.

Then, clasping the insensible female form, Harold descended the vessel's side.

Laying his precious burden gently on the sternsheets of the cutter, Harold Wynne, like the brave British boy that he was, returned once more to the deck of the burning ship.

It was no child's play then—the boiling pitch, the opening seams, the ironwork all aglow, and the hissing, as if of twenty thousand serpents as the bright flames, mingled with the dense smoke, darted aloft and licked the rigging with their seething tongues.

Young Harold stood for a moment, gazing appalled at the fierce heat, which came from the holes like the crater of a volcano.

To essay to go below would have been instant death.

The stout timbers were yielding rapidly to the fierce anger of the devouring element.

Some of the guns that were loaded exploded with the fierce heat; and everything around bore evidence of the fierce ravager.

Spars were tumbling down, and toppling into the dark waves, here and there aglow with the fierce light, or rendered inky black by the dense columns of smoke that rolled away in great crowds to leeward.

Harold's boat was the only one to board the burning wreck.

The other cutter, the barge, the pinnace, the launch, and galley, even to the frigate's little dingy, were abut the vessel's hull, picking up those of the crew who had been forced overboard by the roaring heat.

"Help, golly, help, Massa Wynne!" cried a voice, in the well-known accents of Jupiter Joe.

Harold turned towards the sound, and beheld the stalwart negro, with a baby clenched in one arm, trying to make his way up the after-cabin skylight.

The brave fellow had entered by one of the stern ports, and nearly lost his life in the endeavour to save that of the infant he held clasped to his manly breast.

The young midy gave him assistance, and, after a hard struggle rescued him from his threatening doom, which indeed at one time seemed inevitable.

"Come on, sar," shouted the black, as well as the choking sensation in his throat would permit him. "Be quick—de powder magazine."

Harold had not thought of this in his anxiety to save life.

Quick as lightning the pair made their way down the side of the burning ship, and the boat was pushed off.

And only in bare time.

Scarcely had a dozen strokes been rowed when a terrific explosion was heard.

(To be continued.)





## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**ARTHUR COURTNEY.**—1st. Your handwriting requires great improvement; you must acquire the power of writing evenly across the paper, instead of going from corner to corner; practice from a good copy will be of much benefit, and write upon lined paper until you have corrected your present deficiency. 2nd. Do not be too hasty in quitting your father's paternal roof; sixteen is rather too young to think of marrying. Thanks for your kind appreciation of the stories in the CHAMPION JOURNAL.

**SEA SHORE RAMBLER.**—To polish shells.—The first rough coat is removed by means of a file; when all the irregularities are filed down a piece of pumice stone is used to obliterate the marks of the file, and to rub down the rough parts that the file will not touch; after this some common red brick, finely pounded and mixed with sweet oil to the consistence of a thick paste, is laid over the shell, and well brushed on it by means of a turning lathe, to which a brush is affixed; this process brings the shell still smoother, and removes the scratches left on by the pumice stone. The next application is rotten-stone, used also with sweet oil, and rubbed on smartly with a piece of coarse flannel, or, which is still better, an old worsted stocking; this again takes out the marks made by the brush of the lathe, and brings the shell almost bright. It must then be washed in water and soda, in order to free it from every vestige of oil; otherwise it will not take a brilliant polish. The fifth and concluding process is dry rouge rubbed on with the palm of the hand until the desired polish is given.

**YOUNG WILLIE.**—You are a fair height for your age. Try one of Green's ships, and accept our thanks.

**EDGAR ATHELING.**—Walnut pomade will darken the hair; it should be used daily in moderation. Accept our thanks.

**INQUIRER.**—The original name of Mount St. Bernard was Mont Jovis; but it took the name of Bernard from the uncle of Charlemagne, who conducted by this route 30,000 men into Italy, in May, A.D. 755. In 1792 several Swiss and Sardinian battalions retreated from Savoy by this road to Aosta; and between the 15th and 29th of May Napoleon led his army of reserve over Mont St. Bernard, previous to his celebrated battle of Marengo.

**CHAMPION.**—You can meet with your requirements at Cummings' handy store, 4, Kennington-road, opposite the New Christ Church. He will tell you whether the bat is worth repairing, and whether it would be cheaper to buy a new one. Thanks.

**T. COLE.**—You are a fair height and weight for a boy of fifteen.

**WOULD-BE TAR.**—Green's Shipping Office, at the East-end.

**T. JONES.**—Get a piece of wadding, fold it into a kind of a ball, dip it into the French polish, and then cover it with a soft piece of linen, and, by adding a drop of linseed oil to the outside, the rag will be ready for use. You must be careful in polishing not to let the rag rest on the wood about to be polished, or it will fetch the polish off. Polish in a circular direction.

**CHAMPION JOE.**—The name of Liverpool is said by some to be derived from a species of liver-wort found on the sea shore; others contend that it is taken from a water fowl, anciently called lever or liver, which formerly frequented a pool now occupied by the town. Proof of the existence of this bird is the crest of the borough arms.

**G. H.**—A good polish for your desk and workbox can be made by mixing a quarter of a pound of shellac with a quarter of a pint of naphtha. The shellac will cost from 6d. to 8d. per pound, naphtha 1s. 2d. a pint. Many thanks.

**INQUISITIVE.**—Your request has been complied with.

**ENGLISH SPRAY.**—The effective strength of the French army at Waterloo, according to the best authority, was 84,190. That of the Anglo-allied army 67,661, out of which 8148 retreated. Thus the actual number of combatants was 59,513.

**WILL DIVER** (Great Yarmouth).—It must be a saturated solution of pure silver in nitric acid. You had better obtain it of a chemist, ready made up for you. The silver should be quite pure; you can obtain it at a refiner's. We fear the coin of the realm would not be pure enough for the purpose. Of course the above solutions are to be of the greatest strength, and afterwards to be diluted with five ounces of distilled water.

**G. C.**—We shall feel obliged if the writer of a letter requiring an answer under the above initials will favour us with his name and address.

**J. MILLER.**—Get some well-bruised plaster of paris and put it in a tea-cup, with double the quantity of oatmeal, adding a little sugar. Throw this mixture on the floor or in the chinks where the cockroaches frequent.

**TOM BOWLES.**—Most of the opticians sell electrical machines; they are not very expensive. Price according to the size and quality. Apply at West, optician, in the Strand.

**JOE.**—It would facilitate an engagement upon the stage if you are acquainted with the manager; if this is not attainable, your best plan will be to write, and if you possess the necessary qualifications, you may have your wish gratified. Writing fair.

**TIBERUS.**—To cure burns the most simple and effective method is by merely covering the burn with common wheat flour.

**THOMAS DRISCOLL** (Money more, county Derry).—The enclosure was available.

**YOUNG CHAMPION.**—Try again.

**HAPPY HAL.**—It is common in many places to have races with wheelbarrows. This performance requires plenty of room, and some open green or meadow is usually selected, where there are no stumps of trees. The candidates are blindfolded, each having his barrow, which he is to drive from a given place or mark, to a certain long distance, where also is another mark. The man who first reaches the mark is the victor. It is not very often this task is readily accomplished. Much laughter is produced by the men winding in and out, and wandering sometimes quite away from the track.

A CONSTANT SUBSCRIBER encloses the following, desiring us to insert it, which we do, so that our readers may judge of its merits:—

### THE CHAMPION.

As I was going home one day  
I looked in a bookseller's shop,  
I saw a lot of journals there,  
But the CHAMPION beat the lot.

Thinks I, such a gallant book as that  
Contains good cheer, I ween,  
For in the wide, wide universe  
Such a pen'orth is rarely seen.

I laid a penny out in one,  
And home my steps I bent,  
Thanking my lucky stars the while  
For the luck they had me sent.

When I reached home I sat me down  
To rest my weary bones,  
While I read that splendid peerless tale,  
Of the gallant brave "Paul Jones."

The next I read was "Happy Hal";  
It made me laugh outright,  
When that cocky beggar, Bullyboy,  
With Samson had a fight.

The tale of the "London Street Boy"  
Has few equals, I must say,  
And also "Edgar Atheling,"  
Let folks say what they may.

"Funny Fred and Jolly Joe"  
Make me whistle and sing,  
And the new tale, named the "Raven's Nest,"  
Is just the proper thing.

The "Blue Jackets of Old England"  
Shows England's might all o'er;  
And I'm sure the CHAMPION will amuse  
Us for many a leisure hour.

Now, here's a toast, young champions—  
"Our Editor, long live he;  
May his rivals go to limbo, and  
The journal prosperous be."

TURK'S LANE.

**SAILOR BOY JACK.**—You will never be able to efface the anchor which you so foolishly defaced your hand with, by pricking in Indian ink, unless you are willing to suffer the most horrible pain by having the flesh blistered. Write to us again.

**ANXIOUS ONE.**—Send the play. We will give it our earliest attention. Send a stamped and directed cover, in which it will be returned if not found admissible.

**DRUMMER BOY.**—You are mistaken. It was at the battle of Hexham that the Lancastrians were defeated by the Yorkists. The battle was fought on May 15th, 1462.

**YOUNG ARTIST.**—To model in wax, rub the article to be modelled over with oil; then cover it over with plaster of Paris, which, when cold, take off. If it cannot be taken off without breaking it, cut it into two parts, then take it off. The wax should be poured in while hot; but not before the inside of the mould is oiled over; and when perfectly cold, all that remains to be done is to take off the mould the same way as the mould was taken off the article now beautifully modelled. If the model of a living person is required, the nostrils must be stopped up with a quill.

### OTHER SPLENDID TALES And Gifts Immediately.

## REMEMBER! REMEMBER!

Several new and spirit-stirring Tales are now in active preparation.

BOYS, ACQUAINT YOUR FRIENDS.

## BOYS! BOYS! BOYS!

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